



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

December 10, 2021

To: School Committee
From: Joe Sawyer
Re: Changes in State Admissions Regulations for Vocational Technical Programs & Admissions Policy for Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School

Last June, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to change the state's regulations for admissions to career/vocational/technical educational programs. These changes will have a significant, negative impact on the ability of Shrewsbury resident students to be admitted to attend Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School, which is the program that almost all Shrewsbury students who seek this type of high school education have attended over the past 25+ years.

The issue of vocational technical admissions fairness has been a focus in recent years, as the popularity of Massachusetts' technical high schools has continued to grow. Our state's technical high school system is among the best in the nation, and in the quarter century after the Education Reform Act of 1993 evolved into places where students could learn in-demand work skills and qualification in a particular vocation, while also receiving a strong academic education that prepared them for post-secondary education if they chose that route. Because the demand for seats has been much higher than available slots, "vocatech" high schools created admissions policies that judged students' middle school records in academics, attendance, and behavior. As a result, students who may have struggled in these areas in a traditional middle school, and who might benefit greatly from a technical high school education, were often not admitted, where students who had stronger middle school track records were accepted. In some cases, this resulted in technical high school student bodies that were not as diverse as their sending communities in various dimensions, such as race/ethnicity, students with disabilities, etc. You can see from the enclosed articles that there was advocacy to change state regulations to remove the selectivity from the process and make it lottery based to address such inequities.

Last spring, the focus of the news articles about the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education bringing a recommended revision to the admissions regulations and the subsequent adoption of the new regulations focused on these inequities. The recommended changes and the adopted updated regulations also contained a key provision that has a major impact on our community, which was to require technical high schools to admit students from member communities before "non-resident" students (the new regulation states "Resident students who meet the minimum requirements for

admission shall be admitted prior to acceptance of any non-resident students seeking the same program.”). This change was not mentioned in the Commissioner’s memorandum to the state board highlighting key changes, nor was it mentioned in any news articles that I read at the time, which focused on the equity issues cited above. I am sorry that I did not recognize that this provision was in the proposed updated regulations, as if I did I would have sent a public comment to the board prior to their final vote illustrating the likely impact on Shrewsbury. The Commissioner’s memorandum and the updated regulations are enclosed.

At the end of September, the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School district’s school committee adopted a new admissions policy that aligned with the new state regulations (enclosed). As required by the new state regulations, they will fill their available 300 seats in the new Grade 9 class first from their member districts of Berlin, Hudson, Marlborough, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, and Westborough, by lottery. Only if seats are left over after that would non-member communities (such as Shrewsbury, Clinton, and Boylston) receive seats, which would also be based on a lottery. Unfortunately, at a meeting on November 22, Assabet officials have informed us that they do expect that they will have more demand from their member communities than seats, which would quite possibly leave Shrewsbury and other non-member communities with no students being admitted, compared with a typical year of 25 to 35 students admitted for Grade 9.

At your meeting of December 15, we will present information to you regarding the differences between member communities of a regional technical high school district and non-member communities regarding the new admissions regulations and other elements of vocational technical school governance. Some parents and community members have asked about the possibility of Shrewsbury joining the Assabet Regional district, and we will provide information regarding the legal process for doing so. The actual regional agreement among the Assabet Regional member communities is enclosed for reference.

The change to the state regulations will affect the 112 Massachusetts communities who do not belong to a regional technical high school district, as their resident students will only receive admittance to a program if the member communities do not have sufficient interest. While the new regulations may succeed in providing more equitable admissions in one sense, it appears that they will be creating a different inequity based on geography, where decisions were made by different communities decades ago whether to be part of a regional technical high school district or to access them through paying tuition for their so-called “non-resident students” have a significant impact today. The School Committee may wish to communicate the impact this will have on Shrewsbury students in a letter to various government officials.

I look forward to answering any questions you have at the meeting on December 15.



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Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
From: Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner
Date: April 9, 2021
Subject: Proposed Amendments to 603 CMR 4.03(6)(a) Career/Vocational Technical Education Admissions Regulations: Initial Discussion and Vote to Solicit Public Comment

This memorandum provides (1) an overview of proposed amendments to [603 CMR 4.03\(6\)\(a\)](#), the Career/Vocational Technical Education (CVTE) admissions regulations (attached), and (2) a summary of other Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) initiatives designed to support equitable access to high quality CVTE programs.

The proposed changes to the regulations follow over a year of stakeholder engagement and discussion on these issues. These discussions, along with the Department's analysis of enrollment and admissions data, have made clear that applying a single set of state-prescribed admissions criteria is not in the best interests of students, families, and vocational schools and programs. Vocational education is driven by many variables, including student interest, labor and market demands, and diverse student populations, both within and across vocational schools. I believe we can best address this complex issue by allowing individual schools and programs to set policies that respond to the needs of their sending communities and are consistent with applicable federal and state laws and regulations to promote equitable access for all students, while retaining the Department's role to monitor compliance and intervene when necessary.

I am bringing these proposed regulatory changes to the Board this month for initial discussion and a vote to solicit public comment. With the Board's approval at its April 20, 2021 meeting, the Department will solicit public comment on the proposed amendments and incorporate feedback, with the goal of bringing them back to the Board for a final vote in June 2021.

1. Proposed amendments to CVTE admissions regulations

The proposed changes to the CVTE admissions regulation [603 CMR 4.03\(6\)\(a\)](#) are intended to address three primary goals:

1. Provide districts offering CVTE programs with flexibility to develop data-informed local admissions policies that promote equitable access, comply with state and federal laws and

regulations, and receive annual approval from the district's school committee or board of trustees.

2. Clarify the Department's authority to intervene in cases of non-compliance, and in such cases, to order changes to admissions policies that may include requiring a lottery.
3. Improve access to information about CVTE for students and families.

In particular, the proposed amended regulation on admission of students:

- **Adds** that each vocational school and program must annually submit its admissions policy to the Department by August 15, publish it in its Program of Studies, post a copy on the school website, and provide a copy to each student applicant and their parent/guardian. Vocational schools and programs must make these admissions materials available in both English and the primary language of the home, if such primary language is other than English.
- **Adds** that vocational schools and programs using selective criteria shall not use criteria that have the effect of disproportionately excluding persons in protected classes unless they can demonstrate that (1) the criteria have been validated as essential to participation and (2) alternative equally valid criteria that do not have such a disproportionate adverse effect are unavailable.
- **Adds** that admission policies using selective criteria may be used only when there are more applicants than available seats.
- **Removes** the requirement to use four criteria (grades, attendance, discipline record, and counselor recommendation) and **prohibits** the consideration of excused absences and minor behavior or disciplinary infractions.
- **Removes** language that schools may condition admission on a student having passed courses in English Language Arts or its equivalent and mathematics for the school year immediately preceding their enrollment, while affirming that vocational schools and programs may condition admission on a student having been promoted to the grade they have been admitted to enter.
- **Adds** a requirement that admission policies include strategies to promote equal educational opportunities and attract, enroll, and retain a student population that, when compared to students in similar grades in sending districts, has a comparable academic and demographic profile.
- **Adds** that the admission policy must be approved annually by the school's board of trustees or school committee.
- **Adds** the requirement that vocational schools and programs maintain a record of all students who apply for admission, enroll in the school, or are placed on a waitlist, and their score on admission criteria, if used, to facilitate an analysis and evaluation of the admissions system and its compliance with 603 CMR 4.03(6), and affirms the right for students and parents/guardians to appeal to the superintendent or their designee a decision to deny the student admission to the school or program.
- **Adds** that the Department may intervene in cases where the admissions policies and practices of vocational schools and programs do not comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations and order compliance actions, including revisions to, or replacement of, existing admission policies. Such intervention may include a requirement that such schools and programs institute an admissions lottery.
- **Adds** that sending districts shall offer vocational schools and programs opportunities to provide middle school students with information about vocational programs and careers

on-site at their middle schools, as well as through mail and email. Directs sending districts to not count as an unexcused absence a middle student's tour of a vocational school or program, if the school or program confirms the student's participation.

2. Statewide initiatives designed to support equitable access to CVTE

Regulatory changes are only one part of the Department's initiative to improve equitable access to CVTE. The Department is also working in partnership with stakeholders to provide additional resources and assistance to create more, and better, opportunities for students interested in CVTE in Massachusetts.

CVTE Guidance

In consultation with stakeholders, the Department will issue guidance regarding key stages of students' trajectory through CVTE pathways, from information sharing with prospective students and their families, to admissions policies and practices, to student outcome tracking.

Data Inquiry Tools

The Department is working with vocational schools and programs to engage in thoughtful cycles of data inquiry and has developed several [interactive CVTE data tools](#) to assist schools in reflecting and acting on data related to student admissions (waitlists), enrollment, and performance.

Statewide Secondary Educational Options Awareness Campaign

The Department is developing a statewide awareness campaign to inform all Massachusetts students and families about secondary educational options, including CVTE and [Early College and Innovation Pathways](#). This includes the following components:

- **Statewide Pathways Messaging:** The Department will expand statewide awareness of the pathway options students and families can pursue.
- **Educational Options Finder Website:** This new website will enhance the Department's current [School Finder](#) tool to include all secondary CVTE and other pathways, and the admissions information and timelines for schools offering CVTE programs. The page will include multiple language options so that visitors may view content in prevalent languages spoken in the state.
- **MyCAP Grades 6-8:** The launch of a College, Career, and Civic Ready Framework implemented through My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP) in middle school will help middle school students gain social emotional skills, academic preparation, and career development experiences that will, in turn, help them make informed decisions for secondary education and future career interests, based on personal strengths, interests, and skills.

CVTE Equitable Access Support Grant

The Department plans to issue a multi-year grant opportunity for regional planning efforts, including participants from both vocational and sending districts, to support:

- **Data-informed decision-making** to improve district data practices in examining CVTE waitlist, enrollment, and outcome data alongside other resources in a thoughtful cycle of inquiry throughout the school year.
- **English Learner (EL) recruitment and success** to provide for strategies such as designating a district EL specialist at the vocational school to work with sending

districts to develop targeted, culturally responsive strategies to attract, recruit, and retain English Learners throughout the admissions cycle. The EL specialist can help design and implement an inclusive and accessible admissions process and collaborate with sending districts/schools to provide support to ELs.

- **Culturally-responsive recruitment, admissions, and learning environments** through diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-bias and anti-racism training, with a focus on staff involved with recruitment and admissions, to improve practices such as tours, information sessions, interviews and application review, and to consider other systemic changes.

Expand CVTE Capacity

The Department is working with schools, districts, and partners in the [Workforce Skills Cabinet](#) to expand access to CVTE. These strategies include analyzing new waitlist data to maximize usage of currently available seats, expanding high-demand CVTE programs in comprehensive high schools, supporting 2nd and 3rd shift models (e.g. [After Dark](#) and [Career Technical Initiative](#)), as well as [Innovation Pathways](#) and [Early College](#).

Department staff, including Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner for Educational Options, Elizabeth Bennett, Associate Commissioner for College, Career, and Technical Education, and Caitlin Looby of our legal team, will be present at the meeting to address the Board and answer questions.

Attachments: 603 CMR 4.03(6)(a) — Clean version of regulation with proposed amendments incorporated
603 CMR 4.03(6)(a) — Strikethrough version of regulation showing proposed amendments
Motion

VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION REGULATIONS: ADMISSION OF STUDENTS– 603 CMR 4.03(6)(a)

With proposed amendments shown by underscore or ~~strikethrough~~
Proposed changes made following public comment are ***in bold italics****

Presented to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for initial review and vote to solicit public comment: 4/20/2021

Period of public comment: through 5/28/2021

Final action by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education anticipated: 6/22/2021

603 CMR 4.03(6) Admission of Students

~~(a) Each vocational technical school and comprehensive school which is selective in terms of admission to its secondary vocational technical programs shall develop and implement an admission policy that is consistent with the Department's "Guidelines for Admission Policies of Vocational Technical Secondary Schools and Comprehensive Secondary Schools" that are incorporated into 603 CMR 4.00 by reference. The policy must be approved by the Department prior to implementation. The policy shall be published in the Program of Studies and a copy shall be provided to each student applicant and their parent/guardian. The policy must include the following:~~

(a) Vocational technical schools and vocational programs at comprehensive high schools shall develop and implement an admission policy that is consistent with federal and state law and any relevant guidelines issued by the Department or the U.S. Department of Education. Vocational schools and programs shall condition admission on a student having been promoted to the grade that they have been admitted to enter. Vocational schools and programs whose admission policies include selective criteria may apply the criteria only when there are more applicants than available seats. Such criteria may not consider a student's record of excused absences from school, or minor behavior or disciplinary infractions. ***For purposes of 603 CMR 4.03(6)(a), a "minor behavior or disciplinary infraction" means any student conduct other than conduct for which suspension or expulsion was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H or §37H1/2, or for which suspension or expulsion for more than 10 days was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H3/4.*** Resident students who meet the minimum requirements for admission shall be admitted prior to acceptance of any non-resident students seeking the same program.

Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, each school and program shall ~~annually~~ submit its admissions policy to the Department by ~~August 15~~ ***October 1***, and shall ***annually*** publish it in its Program of Studies, post a copy on the school website, and provide a copy to each student applicant and their parent/guardian. Vocational schools and programs shall ensure that all admissions materials are in both English and the primary language of the home, if such primary language is other than English.

Each policy shall include the following:

* Subject to further revision by the Executive Office of Administration and Finance

~~1. The criteria to be used in selecting students and the process for application and admission to the school. Each selective vocational technical secondary school in Massachusetts shall use a combination of selection criteria to determine which applicants have an ability to benefit, and therefore be admitted to the school unless the school opts to use first come first served or a lottery for admissions. The criteria used shall include academic grades, attendance record, discipline/conduct record, recommendations from the sending school school counselor, and may include a student interview, provided however, that no one criterion exceeds 50% of the total. Resident students who meet the minimum requirements for admission shall be admitted prior to acceptance of any non-resident students seeking the same course of study. Schools shall condition admission on a student having been promoted to the grade that they have been admitted to enter. Schools may condition admission on a student having passed courses in English Language Arts or its equivalent and mathematics for the school year immediately preceding their enrollment in a selective vocational technical school or program;~~

1. The process for application and admission to the school, as well as admission to particular programs within the school, including any criteria, lotteries, or other processes to be used in selecting students;

~~2. A description of the Exploratory Program;~~

2. A plan that includes deliberate, specific strategies to promote equal educational opportunities and attract, enroll, and retain a student population that, when compared to students in similar grades in sending districts, has a comparable academic and demographic profile;

~~3. The criteria and process to be used in selecting students for admission to particular vocational technical education programs commonly referred to as vocational technical majors within the selective vocational technical secondary school or comprehensive secondary school; and~~

3. A description of the exploratory program, if such program is required by 603 CMR 4.03(4)(e); and

~~**4. A Review Process and an Appeal Process.** A process at the school district level for students and parents/guardians to review and appeal the decision to deny the student admission to the school or program shall be included. The district shall maintain documentation as to the specific admission requirements that were not met, and must provide such documentation to the Department or to the student's parent/guardian upon request.~~

4. A process for prospective students and parents/guardians to appeal to the superintendent or their designee the decision to deny the prospective student admission to the school or program. The superintendent or their designee shall maintain documentation as to the specific admission requirements that were used to deny admission, and shall provide such

documentation to the Department or to the prospective student's parent/guardian upon request.

Vocational schools and programs that use selective criteria shall not use criteria that have the effect of disproportionately excluding persons of a particular race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability unless they demonstrate that (1) such criteria have been validated as essential to participation in vocational programs; and (2) alternative equally valid criteria that do not have such a disproportionate adverse effect are unavailable. Selective criteria shall be approved annually by the school's board of trustees or school committee. **The superintendent of the vocational school or program shall submit an annual attestation to the Department that the admissions policy of the school or program complies with federal and state law and any relevant guidelines issued by the Department or the U.S. Department of Education.**

Vocational technical schools and programs shall maintain a record of all students who apply for admission, enroll in the school, or are placed on a waitlist, and their score on admission criteria, if used, to facilitate an analysis and evaluation of the admissions system and its compliance with 603 CMR 4.03(6). The school or program shall provide such information to the Department upon request.

The Department ~~may intervene in~~ **will take actions it deems necessary to address** cases where the admissions policies and practices of vocational technical schools and programs do not comply with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, and order compliance actions, including revisions to, or replacement of, existing admission policies. Such intervention may include a requirement that such vocational technical schools and programs institute an admissions lottery.

Sending districts shall offer vocational schools and programs opportunities to provide middle school students with information about vocational programs and careers on-site at their middle schools, as well as through mail and email. Sending districts may not count middle school student tours of vocational schools or programs during the school day as unexcused absences if the vocational school or program confirms the student's participation, **and may not unreasonably withhold student access to tours of vocational schools and programs during the school day.**

Note: The current regulation on admission of students, 603 CMR 4.03(6), is available [here](#).

ADMISSION POLICY

I. 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.

An admission process is necessary for vocational-technical schools where space is a limiting factor. Vocational technical learning spaces are designed and equipped to serve a specific maximum number of students safely. Therefore, to accommodate a safe learning environment, all applications to grades nine through twelfth at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School (Assabet) will be processed using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

II. ADMISSIONS

When Assabet receives more applications than it has available seats, Assabet applies a minimum requirement lottery - applicants must complete 3 required elements (Application, Interview, and Recommendation) to be considered for the lottery to determine which students it will admit. The number of students accepted each year from each of the Assabet Valley RVSD member communities (Berlin, Hudson, Marlborough, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, Westborough) will be determined by the three-year average of the previous year's October 1 enrollment numbers that are submitted to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. For example, if the town of Hudson, shows an average of 50 students enrolled over the past three years October 1 enrollment numbers, then 50 seats would be available to Hudson for the upcoming Admissions school year. If the number of students that apply from Hudson is less, those available seats will be put back into a general pool and will be filled last. This method should ensure that all member communities are represented equally based on their history of enrollment with the school district. The criteria Assabet applies has been approved by its school committee, and the school committee will approve the use of these criteria annually. Assabet's admission policy is available on the school website and is on file at the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

II. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Assabet does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, disability, marital status, veteran's status, or homeless status.

If a student's primary home language is not English, Assabet will provide them with an application form in their home language. Please contact our Admissions Office at 508-485-9430 x1250 or email admissions@assabet.org, if you have questions or need help filling out the application form. If there is a student with limited English proficiency, a qualified representative from Assabet 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. Applications are available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese or the current dominant languages of our sending communities. Accommodations for any other linguistic groups will be granted upon request.

Assabet is committed to providing educational opportunities to students experiencing homelessness. Please contact the Director of Pupil Personnel at guidance@assabet.org, 508-485-9430 with any questions. Students with disabilities may voluntarily identify themselves to Assabet to request reasonable accommodations during the application and admission process. In these circumstances, accommodations will be granted upon review.

Neither a student's disability nor the primary language of their home will have any effect on their admission to Assabet.

Consistent with Massachusetts [regulations](#), Assabet 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 students in similar grades in sending districts, has a comparable academic around the demographic profile."

- *Attend Community Events-local fairs, festivals, and events*
- *Community Outreach-reach out to local organizations serving students and families*
- *Run and host the Feira da Familia- connecting multilingual resources for multilingual families in our communities.*
- *Implement strategies created by the Admissions Data Action team annually -after review of most recent data.*

III. ELIGIBILITY

Any rising or current 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th-grade student who is a resident of the Assabet Valley Regional Technical School District (Berlin, Hudson, Marlborough, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, Westborough), may apply for admission. Applicants from these communities who meet the minimum admission requirements are admitted before any non-residents seeking the same program.

Accepted applicants should be aware that their admission is conditional on the following elements which will be reported by a school form completed by sending school personnel at the close of the school year: Students may only be enrolled to Assabet if they have been promoted to the grade they are seeking to enter; if they are not ultimately promoted to enter the grade they have applied for, their admission will be rescinded.

Students who have received disciplinary infractions for conduct for which suspension or expulsion was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H or §37H1/2, or for which suspension or expulsion for more than 10 days was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H3/4 within the previous school year their admission will be rescinded.

All completed applications (including recommendations) received by January 15th will be considered for fall admissions and included in the initial lottery. Applicants must participate in an informational interview that will take place from January to March. The initial lottery will take place in April. Applications

received after this timeline will be processed and placed on the waitlist in the order of date application received. All applications will be processed using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS:

Students who are not residents of Assabet's seven in the district communities are eligible to apply for admission to Assabet. Please be aware that residents of the Assabet district communities 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. Students who begin their enrollment as District residents and move outside of the District during their enrollment, who request to remain at Assabet as nonresidents under M.G.L. c. 74, Section 7 and 7C will be allowed to do so providing that they obtain approval from the Superintendent of the student's District of Residence in accordance with the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education *Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process* located at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres_guidelines.

In all cases, nonresident applicants must file a Chapter 74 *Vocational Technical Nonresident Student Tuition Application* (located at: www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions) with the Superintendent of the student's district of residence in accordance with the MA Department of Education *Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process* pursuant to M.G.L. c. 74. www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres_guidelines.

If the student's parent/guardian finds that the decision of the Superintendent of the District of Residence is contrary to law, regulations, Board of Education, or Department of Elementary and Secondary Education policy, the application may be forwarded to the Department for review within 10 business days of its receipt from the District of Residence in accordance with the Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process pursuant to M.G.L. c. 74. M.G.L. c. 74 Section 8A requires that the municipality of residence provide transportation to students admitted to Assabet as nonresidents under M.G.L. c.74, Sections 7 and 7C.

HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS:

Students who are formally home-schooled may apply for admission to Assabet provided all admission criteria are followed. The Home School student's parent(s)/guardians(s) must submit a copy of the Home School approval letter from the local school superintendent.

TRANSFER STUDENTS:

Students already participating in Chapter 74 programs at another school may apply for admission to Assabet and will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants. Transfer applications will be considered for the following school year and be processed on the same timeline as the first-year student applicants. Transfer students from other M.G.L. c. 74 state-approved vocational-technical programs, who move into the Assabet School District are eligible to apply.

SCHOOL CHOICE:

Assabet 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. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Students interested in applying to Assabet for fall admission to the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade must:
 - a. Obtain an application from the local school guidance counselor, from the Assabet's website www.assabet.org or from the Assabet admissions office. Applications for the following school year will be available on October 15, 2021.
 - b. Return the completed application, signed by the applicant and parent/guardian, to the Assabet Admissions office by the January 15, 2022 deadline.
 - c. Have an informational interview with a member of the Assabet admissions committee. Every effort is made to conduct interviews with the students sending school. In cases of student absence on interview days, admissions representatives will work with sending school professionals to reschedule the interview. If a time is not established the Assabet Admissions/Public Relations Representative will contact the applicant's family to arrange for interview time and location.
 - d. All admissions materials will be available in the students' home language.
2. It is the responsibility of the sending school counselor (or other school personnel, if applicable) to:
 - Provide information about Assabet, its programs, and the timeline of the application process to students upon request.
 - Assist in organizing and scheduling school presentations
 - Assist in organizing and scheduling Assabet visits
 - Provide contact information pursuant to current regulations for students and families in their district
 - Complete the end of the year form for each accepted student to determine final enrollment eligibility.

LATE APPLICATIONS/WAITLIST:

Candidates for fall admission to grades 9, 10, or 11 who apply after the due date and meet the minimum criteria will be placed on the waitlist based on the date of application. The waitlist will remain in place for one school year. At the conclusion of the school year, applicants will be asked if they would like to be considered for seats that become available within their graduating class. Applicants will be invited to resubmit their materials for submission in the new lottery/waitlist if seats are available.

WITHDRAWN STUDENTS:

Students who withdraw from Assabet may reapply for admission to Assabet following the procedures contained herein. Applications for readmission will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy

V. ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

It is the responsibility of the AVRTHS Superintendent to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures required to admit and enroll applicants consistent with all applicable laws, regulations, and guidance.

The committee consists of the following:

- Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Chairperson
- Assabet Admissions/ Public Relations Representative
- School Counselors
- 2-4 Volunteer Teachers

The responsibilities of the Admissions Committee include:

- a. following of the admissions procedures
- b. processing applications
- c. interviewing prospective students
- d. acceptance of students according to the procedures and criteria in the admission policy.
- e. establishment of a waiting list of candidates if all available seats have been filled.

VI. ADMISSIONS COMMUNICATION POLICIES

Assabet maintains a calendar of events on its website www.assabet.org where it 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 admissions@assabet.org.

AVRTHS disseminates information about the school and/or recruitment information through a variety of methods. Including but not limited to:

- a. A timetable of all admission activities is developed in August posted to the school website and mailed to the guidance office of each sending school district and to each seventh and eighth-grade student in those districts.
- b. Assabet will work with all in district schools to schedule presentations in feeding middle schools, including student panels, information on application procedures, timelines, and technical program opportunities
- c. Career Awareness Days are scheduled in the Fall, and all eighth-graders are invited to visit the school and see the technical programs in action. Transportation to and from Career Awareness Days is provided by Assabet.
- d. A school-wide open house in December during which parents, students, and the local community can see demonstrations and talk to teachers in all of the academic and technical programs in the school. Admissions Information Sessions are presented for prospective

applicants and their parents.

- e. The Assabet recruitment materials, which describe the vocational-technical programs, academic courses, sports, clubs, cooperative education, and special education resources, are distributed to every seventh and eighth-grade student, supplied to all local sending schools, and distributed during all open house and information sessions. All recruitment materials are available in the dominant languages of the sending communities.
- f. Further assistance for families in need. Including assistance and in-person evenings for filling out necessary forms.

Assabet offers tours to interested individual applicants, as well as, groups. To request a tour, please call or email our Admissions Office at admissions@assabet.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 are as excused absences by sending districts.

VII. SELECTION PROCESS

When more students apply to Assabet than available seats.

The minimum requirements will be the following:

1. Completed application submitted to Assabet by January 15
2. Applicants must attend an informational interview.
3. Applicants must submit a letter of recommendation. A form is provided with the application. The recommendation may be written by a counselor, teacher, advisor, coach, family member, or community member.

Applicants with completed requirements within the admissions timeline will be assigned a lottery number. The admissions committee will meet for a lottery evening, then conduct the lottery until seats are filled. Applicants from district towns who meet the minimum admission requirements is admitted before any non-residents seeking admission. All completed applications included (application and reference) received by January 15th will be considered for fall admissions and included in the initial lottery. Applicants must participate in an informational interview that will take place from January to March. The initial lottery will take place in April. Applicants received after this timeline will be processed and placed on the waitlist in the order of date application received

VIII. EXPLORATORY PROGRAM (IF APPLICABLE)

Because AVRTHS offers more than 5 Chapter 74 state-approved programs, Assabet provides a half-year exploratory program for 9th-grade students, which is based on the applicable Vocational Technical Education and Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

All ninth-graders who enroll at Assabet participate in a 5-month vocational-technical exploratory program designed to help them learn about their talents and interests relative to a variety of different vocational-technical programs. After a 36-hour mini exploratory that includes rotating through all program offerings,

students choose the top 6 programs they wish to explore for an extended period of time (approx. 30 hours per program).

During the extended exploratory students will receive a feedback form from the technical program teachers which includes strengths and areas for improvement. This feedback will not be considered or factored in during the placement lottery.

IX. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ADMISSION

Assabet uses the following system for students to identify and enroll in their Chapter 74 technical program:

Assabet will host a decision night for all 9th-grade students and families, they will have the opportunity to submit their first, second, and third choice. Students must have explored a program to rank it as their first, second, or third choice. Staff will be available to assist families who require or would like assistance with this process. The school counseling staff will conduct a technical program selection meeting to process a lottery for students' first choices. Subsequent second and third choice lotteries will be conducted for all students are placed based on space availability. The lottery system will be used to place students on a waitlist in the event that they are not placed in their first, second, or third place program. In the occurrence that, upon conclusion of the lottery, students did not receive a seat in their first, second, or third choice program students will be offered seats in programs that have openings. Waitlists will remain in effect for one school year following the initial lottery.

Students may only be granted continued enrollment in a specific technical program if they have been promoted to the next grade level; if they are not ultimately promoted to the next grade level, due to failure or credit deficiency they will forfeit their seat in the program.

Students who have received disciplinary infractions for conduct which suspension or expulsion was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H or §37H1/2, or for which suspension or expulsion for more than 10 days was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H3/4 during the exploratory process for their desired program will not be eligible to choose that program during the selection process.

X. REVIEW AND APPEALS PROCESS

ADMISSION TO Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School

If Assabet does not accept an applicant or places them on a waitlist, the applicant or their parent/guardian may request that the Superintendent of Assabet review that decision within 30 days of the admissions decision.

These requests can be made in the following ways:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| By email | By hard-copy mail or hand delivery |
| ehoule@assabet.org | 215 Fitchburg Street, Marlborough, MA 01752 |

The Superintendent 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 will review the following information:

Material submitted by the applicant
A written record of the lottery process

ADMISSION TO SPECIFIC PROGRAMS WITHIN Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School

Students who have been admitted to Assabet will need to apply to a specific program of study (also known as a “major” or “shop”) during the beginning of Term 2.

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

| By email | By hard-copy mail or hand delivery |
|--------------------|--|
| ehoule@assabet.org | 215 Fitchburg Street, Marlborough MA 01752 |

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

Material submitted by the applicant
A written record of the lottery process

XI. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

Assabet maintains records of all students who apply, enroll, or are waitlisted, to facilitate analysis of its admissions system and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Assabet will provide this information to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon request.

PROPOSED: 9/14/2021
REVISED:

APPROVED: 9/28/2021
APPROVED:

Fighting for fairness in vocational tech school admissions

The state's education board should consider requiring a lottery system.

By The Editorial Board Updated March 28, 2021, 4:00 a.m.



Blue Hills Regional Technical School in Canton, Mass. Jonathan Wiggs/Globe Staff

Those “gaps” cry out to be filled through an admissions system that can provide fairer outcomes and ultimately through an expansion of programs most in demand.

Get Today in OpinionGlobe Opinion's must-reads, delivered to you every Sunday-Friday.

The numbers don't lie.

The first ever study of wait lists for the 2020-21 school year (first ever because it was the first time the department had required some 58 vocational schools to submit data on students wait-listed for admission) found on average 1.75 applicants for every seat — although in some communities there indeed were twice as many applicants as places.

However, only 60 percent of students of color who applied were accepted, versus 73 percent of white students who applied. Similarly, some 58 percent of economically disadvantaged students who applied were picked versus 75 percent of those not economically disadvantaged. Some 57 percent of those whose first language isn't English were selected, compared to 70 percent native English speakers.

The department itself concluded that the disparity in "admission rates indicates an opportunity gap."

Giving it a name, of course, doesn't make it go away.

Last week, the Vocational Education Justice Coalition advocated for a lottery system to help right the wrong that even the department is acknowledging.

"We need to mandate a lottery so it's open to all who can benefit," said Juan Cofield, president of the NAACP's New England conference, at the group's news conference. "It's not perfect, but it's better than what we've got."

Currently, schools — and most of them are regional vocational technical schools, reporting to their own regional governing boards — look at grades,

attendance, disciplinary history, and recommendations. How much weight each gets is a local decision. Some do in-person interviews.

Some have long waiting lists. And then there are the rare exceptions like [Boston's Madison Park](#), a perpetual candidate for reinvention, which has cycled through six headmasters since 2012 and is currently without a permanent leader.

But for schools that can afford to be choosy, the coalition charges they too often opt for the academically gifted and the college bound — those least likely to later make use of the vocational skills they were taught.

It was a point made by [Tom Fischer](#), executive director of the North Atlantic States Carpenters Training Fund, who said he worries about the drop-off in vocational school grads "seeking entry into our trade programs, which is now at an all-time low.

"I wonder how many students are not being given the opportunity to pursue well-paid careers in the construction trades due to admission policies which exclude them from this opportunity," he added.

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, who was one of 23 mayors to raise the issue of vocational education admissions with the board of education last year, said, "We need something that is more fair, more transparent, more neutral. And that is a lottery. It's good enough for charter schools."

That indeed is a fair point. And we are talking about eighth-graders here — some of whom are having their futures determined because of a blot on their middle school disciplinary record or less than perfect English skills.

Education Commissioner Jeff Riley surely didn't order up all that data without a plan for addressing the obvious disparities they point to. He is

expected to announce his recommendations at the board's April meeting — which would set in motion a public comment period and finally a vote of the board.

While vocational education programs have advanced at most schools to match the needs of our changing world, admissions procedures haven't. It's time they did, and a lottery seems the most equitable of answers.

But if the demand remains that strong — and there's every indication it will — the obvious next question is why aren't student placements allowed to grow as well?

House Speaker Ron Mariano just last Thursday proposed a "skill credentialing system" to "take the guesswork out of the hiring process" for prospective employers. In a speech to the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, Mariano said, "Traditional degree programs don't work for everyone. Skill credentialing has the promise of providing living wages and strong careers for those that choose not to go to a two- or four-year college."

Teaching those skills is exactly what vocational technical schools have been doing for years and why the best of those programs are in such demand.

As long as seats are limited, fairer admissions policies at public vocational schools are essential. But growing programs that have proven their value is just a smart thing to do.

Editorials represent the views of the Boston Globe Editorial Board. Follow us on Twitter at [@GlobeOpinion](https://twitter.com/GlobeOpinion).

Mass. education commissioner recommends vocational school admissions changes to boost fairness

By [Naomi Martin](#) Globe Staff, Updated April 18, 2021, 4:35 p.m.



Students passed through a hallway at Blue Hills Regional Technical School. Jonathan Wiggs/Globe Staff

After more than a year of discussions with vocational school leaders and civil-rights groups, Riley said in a memo that “applying a single set of state-prescribed admissions criteria is not in the best interests of students, families, and vocational schools and programs.”

"I believe we can best address this complex issue by allowing individual schools and programs to set policies that respond to the needs of their sending communities," Riley said.

Civil rights organizations, which [had called for a lottery system](#) similar to those used by charter schools, have long criticized the current admissions criteria as being discriminatory against students of color, low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities, depriving them of an important career pathway to the middle class. Data show these groups all have far lower chances of being accepted to the schools than their peers.



Meghan Corrigan worked in a construction-technology class at Blue Hills Regional Technical School in September. The school offers programs such as automotive technology, electrical work, cosmetology, and culinary arts. Jonathan Wiggs/Globe Staff

The new proposal doesn't prescribe how schools should judge applicants, though it sets some guardrails. For example, schools could no longer consider applicants' minor disciplinary or behavioral infractions. They also couldn't use any criteria that lead to disproportionate rates of exclusion of students based on their race, disability status, language, or income — unless the schools can demonstrate that there's no other option that's fairer, and the criteria is essential for participation in the program.

"This is a high standard that [we] believe few criteria could meet other than promotion to the ninth grade," said Dan French, of Citizens for Public Education, speaking on behalf of a coalition of groups fighting for changes.

Riley also recommended that vocational schools have to submit their admissions policies each year for review by the state. The state could order changes, including implementing a lottery system, if admissions are found to be unfair, he said.

The proposal follows years of advocacy by the Vocational Education Justice Coalition, whose members include politicians, civil rights organizations, education advocates, teachers unions, and construction trade unions. The coalition said a lottery system would give every student equal access to the public vocational schools, which they said have become exclusive institutions for college-bound students in part due to pressure the schools felt to boost MCAS standardized test scores and their academic reputations.

Many students interested in trades, but who have less impressive academic records, often flounder in regular high schools and end up dropping out, they say.

About half of vocational school graduates were in two- or four-year colleges 12 to 16 months after graduating, state officials have said. But they said that

doesn't mean all those students didn't belong in a vocational school; a number of vocational fields, like nursing, require higher education. About one-third of graduates were working in a field related to their vocational school major, and 11 percent were employed in an unrelated field.

In response to the growing equity concerns, the state recently analyzed wait list data for 18,560 applicants vying for 10,600 ninth-grade seats at 58 selective regional vocational schools. That [analysis](#) seemed to support the coalition's concerns, showing voc-tech schools admitted just half of English learners who applied, while 70 percent of fluent English speakers won admission. Only 60 percent of applicants of color got slots, compared to 73 percent of white applicants.

The coalition said the proposal was an important step, though its members worried that the flexibility for school districts could lead to problematic policies being adopted with little oversight by the state.

"This will require ongoing proactive review by the [Department of Elementary and Secondary Education] and action against any newly submitted admissions policies by individual schools if they try to keep aspects of current discriminatory ranking systems," said Jack Livramento, a member of the United Interfaith Action of New Bedford and Fall River, as well as the Massachusetts Communities Action Network.

The Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators praised the proposal, saying it offered schools crucial autonomy to respond to different community needs.

The career and technical education schools are focused on ensuring that all students who want to attend their programs have "equal access and the opportunity to do so," said Maureen Lynch, the association's president-elect and superintendent of Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High

School in Haverhill.

"Our members have worked hard to share and discuss best practices for admissions policies that are equitable and that promote diversity and inclusion," Lynch added.

If approved, the draft regulation will be subject to public comments for two months before a final vote in June.

Naomi Martin can be reached at naomi.martin@globe.com.

To boost access to vocational schools, Mass. drops requirement to consider grades, attendance, or discipline in admissions

By Felicia Gans and Kate Lusignan Globe Correspondent, Updated June 22, 2021, 11:51 a.m.



Members of the Vocational Education Justice Coalition demonstrated at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Malden during Tuesday's meeting. Christiana Botic for The Boston Globe

The change in the state's admissions policy was the first in two decades and highlights a broader move across the country to provide disadvantaged

students more equitable access to sought-after educational programs. In Boston, for example, the School Committee is weighing changes to the use of test scores in the admissions process to the city's three exam schools.

The vote — approved by all Board of Elementary and Secondary Education members except parent representative Mary Ann Stewart, who voted present (a form of abstaining) — is aimed at making the student populations of vocational schools more closely reflect the demographics of their local school districts. A single set of "state-prescribed admissions criteria" is not best for students, families, or the schools, Commissioner Jeffrey Riley wrote in a memo to the board.

Vocational schools are expected to create "data-informed admissions policies," Riley said Tuesday, although the board left it to each individual school to determine what those criteria would be. The new admissions plans also should receive approval every year by the vocational schools' local boards.



Yessenia Alfaro, of Chelsea, spoke at a demonstration in front of the State Education Department in Malden on Tuesday morning. Christiana Botic for The Boston Globe

The changes were [recommended](#) by Riley and [preliminarily approved](#) by the board in April. Though the new admissions policy will apply to the entering class of 2022, it also could affect transfer applications during the 2021-22 school year.

"It's not just the vocational schools that are going to need to change," Riley said. Local districts "need to allow the children to have greater access to the schools to see the vocational programming, to go on the tours, and that is something else that we want to do and ensure that we make sure that districts do."

Riley also emphasized the change will grant Massachusetts education

leaders the right to intervene if a school's admissions policy is not compliant with state and federal laws. The state can order changes to the policy and could even require a lottery system.

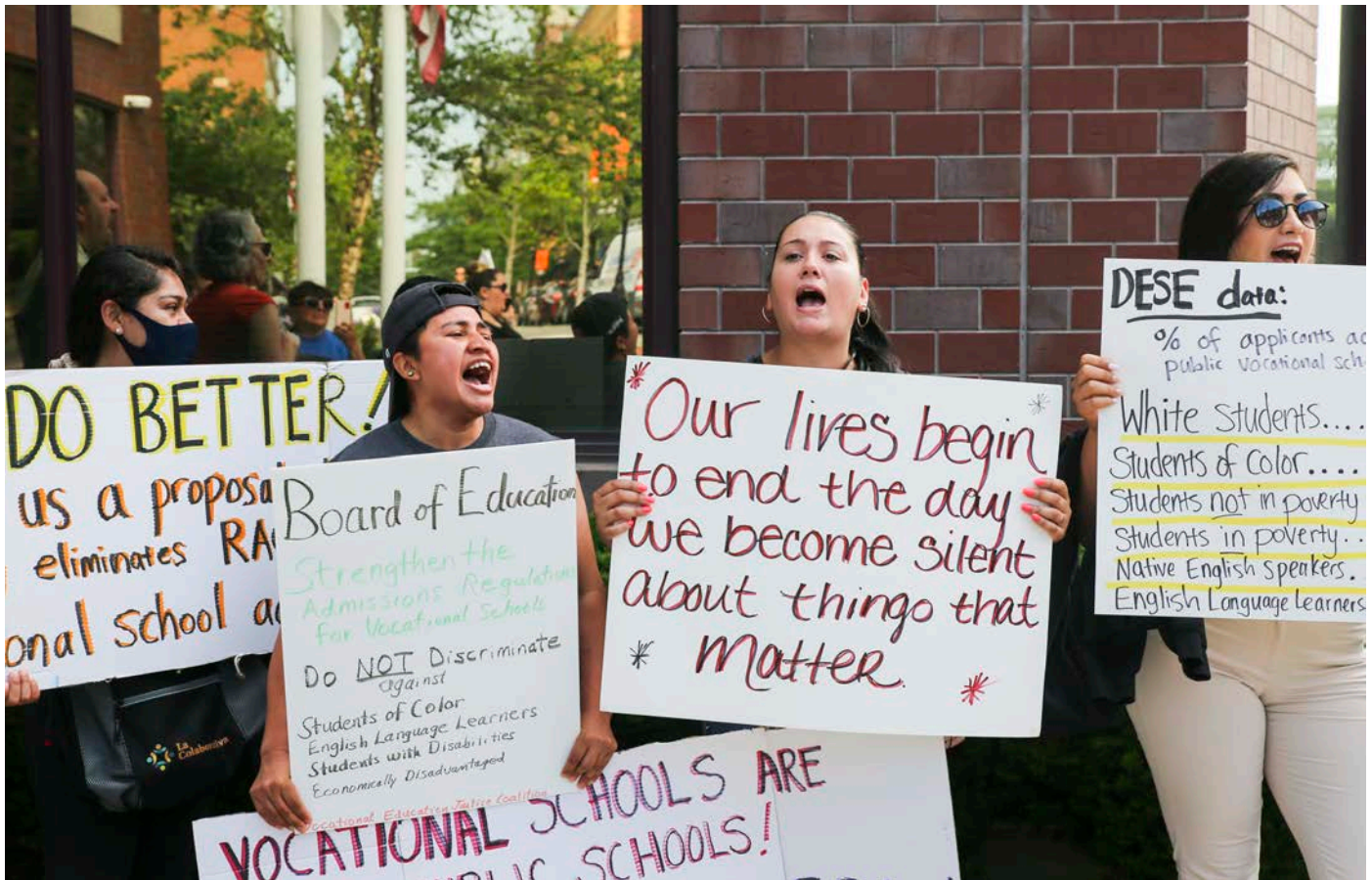
"Last year, we gave the vocational schools an opportunity to make changes, and we didn't feel that they had done a substantial enough job in doing that," he said.

Prior to the vote, Stewart, the lone abstainer, voiced concern about the lack of clarity in the regulations concerning what would be considered an unfair practice and what would cause the board to step in and impose a lottery system.

"One of my concerns is whether the proposed regulations really sufficiently are clear about what the administrators are supposed to do," she said, expressing concern that grades, while no longer mandated, still could be used in newly created data-informed policies that could hurt the admissions chances of English learners, students of color, and those with disabilities.

In a public comment period before the vote, state Senator John Cronin also urged the board to create clear regulations and standards for vocational schools. Without them, he said, the state is simply "punting on the hardest questions" surrounding the issue.

But giving administrators leeway to craft their own admissions policies acknowledges the complexity of the issue, Bradford L. Jackson, superintendent-director of Shawsheen Valley Technical High School, said in an interview after the meeting. A one-size-fits-all admissions policy doesn't allow each technical school to consider its own shortcomings, he said.



Members of La Colaborativa, a community group that's part of the Vocational Education Justice Coalition, demonstrated in Malden on Tuesday. Christiana Botic for The Boston Globe

At Shawsheen, which serves five communities north of Boston, English language learners make up fewer than 2 percent of the student body. In its communities, however, 8 percent of students are learning English. Jackson hasn't decided exactly how Shawsheen will change its admissions policy, but determining where English language learners — and other underrepresented students — get lost will be part of the process, he said.

"This was the best solution to move us towards the goal" of a more diverse student body, Jackson said.

A group called the Vocational Education Justice Coalition said the admissions change doesn't go far enough. Comprising politicians, advocates, civil rights organizations, and unions, the coalition has called the

state's vocational admissions policies "discriminatory" against students of color, economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and students with disabilities.

Coalition leaders have urged the state to adopt a lottery system to distribute vocational school seats, rather than waiting until a school needs the intervention.

Prior to Tuesday's meeting, outside the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Malden, about a dozen coalition members demonstrated with signs reading "Vocational schools are public schools" and "Equal opportunity for all."

"Both [students'] lived experience as well as the research shows that discipline, grades, absences, interviews, counselor recommendations, these are all things that have been proven through decades of research, but also literally, all of these folks lived experience that are completely subject to bias," said Anna Hadingham, youth organizational coordinator at coalition member La Colaborativa.

Coalition members also expressed disappointment that state leaders had not fully considered their recommendations in the changes.

"We're troubled by the [regulation] because although it has some net positive, it has other lines that seems to allow them to continue their system, which is what caused the discrimination," said Lew Finfer, special projects director of Massachusetts Communities Action Network, at the demonstration.



A separate group demonstrating against mask mandates in schools attempted to overshadow, and at times became confrontational with, the Vocational Educational Justice Coalition. Christiana Botic for The Boston Globe

Demonstrators from the coalition were heckled by counterprotesters, who held signs against masking and vaccinating children, and shouted epithets, including "Learn English" and "Why don't you go back to where you came from?" One started a chant: "We're not racist."

Tuesday's meeting — the board's last regular meeting until September — was interrupted multiple times by the group of community members angry about a mask-wearing mandate that officials have already dropped for the 2021-22 school year. The board first took a brief recess when people in the room continued speaking over board members; once outside, protesters briefly pounded on windows while the meeting continued.

Although the mask mandate and other COVID-19 safety protocols have

been relaxed, state education leaders plan to work with the Department of Public Health to determine whether any additional health and safety protocols need to be issued later this summer.

Correction: A previous version of this story misstated Lew Finfer's role with the Massachusetts Communities Action Network. He is the special projects director.

Kate Lusignan can be reached at kate.lusignan@globe.com.

AGREEMENT WITH RESPECT TO THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF A
VOCATIONAL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

This agreement is entered into pursuant to Chapter 513 of the Acts of 1966 by and among the city of Marlborough and the towns of Berlin, Boylston, Hudson, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, and Westborough (or by and among the city of Marlborough and such three or more of said towns as shall accept said Chapter 513).

In consideration of the mutual promises herein contained, it is hereby agreed as follows:

SECTION I -THE REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(A) Composition

The Regional District School Committee, hereinafter sometimes referred to as the Committee, shall consist of eight members, one from the city of Marlborough, and one from each of the towns of Berlin, Boylston, Hudson, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, and Westborough. The members of the Committee shall be elected at the regular city elections and at the annual town elections, except that the members on the Interim Committee shall be appointed as provided in Subsection I (B). All members shall serve until their respective successors are elected and qualified. Notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary contained in this subsection, if the city of Marlborough and three or more of the above-mentioned towns, but less than seven of them, accept the provisions of Chapter 513 of the

Acts of 1966, the total membership of eight on the Committee shall be reduced by the number of members which would have represented any non-accepting towns and all references in this agreement to any non-accepting towns shall be deemed stricken therefrom.

(B) Interim Committee

Within ten days after the establishment of the regional school district, the moderator of each member town shall appoint one member and the mayor of the city of Marlborough shall appoint one member to serve on the Committee. Each of the members appointed by the moderators and the member appointed by the mayor of the city of Marlborough shall have been members of the regional school district planning board which submitted this agreement if such persons are available and willing to serve. The members so appointed shall serve on the Committee until their respective successors are elected and qualified to serve as provided in Subsections I (C) and I (E) of this agreement.

(C) Elected Members

At the biennial city election in 1969, the city of Marlborough shall elect one member to serve on the Committee for a term of four years, and at the biennial city election held every four years thereafter, the said city shall elect one member to serve for a term of four years. At the annual town elections in 1969, each of the following towns which are members of the

District shall elect members to serve on the Committee as follows: the towns of Berlin and Boylston shall each elect one member for a term of one year; the towns of Hudson and Maynard shall each elect one member for a term of two years; the towns of Northborough and Southborough shall each elect one member for a term of three years; and the town of Westborough shall elect one member for a term of four years. Thereafter, in every year in which the term of office of an elected member expires, the member town involved shall, at its annual town election, elect one member to serve for a term of four years.

(D) Vacancies

If a vacancy occurs in the Interim Committee described in Subsection I (B), such vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. If a vacancy occurs among the elected members of a town, the selectmen and the local School Committee members from the member town involved, acting jointly, shall appoint a member to serve until the next annual town election, at which election a successor shall be elected to serve for the balance of the unexpired term, if any. If a vacancy occurs from the city of Marlborough, the City Council and School Committee of the city of Marlborough, acting jointly, shall appoint a member to serve for the balance of the unexpired term.

(E) Organization and Commencement of Terms of Office

The term of office of any member from a member town shall begin on April 1 following the election of such member and the

term of office of any member from the city of Marlborough shall begin on January 1 following the election of such member. Promptly upon the appointment and qualification of the members of the Interim Committee and on April 1 of each year thereafter, the Committee shall organize and choose by ballot a Chairman and a Vice Chairman from among its own membership.

(F) Powers and Duties

The Committee shall have all the powers and duties conferred and imposed upon it by this agreement and such other additional powers and duties as are specified in Chapter 513 of the Acts of 1966, and any amendments thereof or additions thereto, now or hereafter enacted, or as may be specified in any other applicable general or special law.

(G) Quorum

The quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the Committee, but a number less than the majority may adjourn.

SECTION II - TYPE OF REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL

The regional district school shall be a vocational high school consisting of grades nine through twelve, inclusive. The Committee is also hereby authorized to establish and maintain such kinds of education, acting as trustees therefor, as may be provided by cities or towns under the provisions of Chapter 74 of the General Laws and acts amendatory thereof, in addition thereto or dependent thereon.

SECTION III - LOCATION OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL

The regional district school shall be located within the geographical limits of the District and within a radius of five miles from the intersection of Routes 20 and 495, which intersection is in the city of Marlborough.

SECTION IV - APPORTIONMENT AND PAYMENT OF COSTS INCURRED BY THE DISTRICT

(A) Classification of Costs

For the purpose of apportioning assessments levied by the District against the member municipalities, costs shall be divided into two categories: capital costs and operating costs.

(B) Capital Costs

Capital costs shall include all expenses in the nature of capital outlay such as the cost of acquiring land, the cost of constructing, reconstructing, and adding to a school building or buildings, and the cost of remodeling or making extraordinary repairs to a school building or buildings, including without limitation the cost of the original equipment and furnishings for such school buildings or additions, plans, architects' and consultants' fees, grading and other costs incidental to placing school buildings and additions and related structures and premises in operating condition. Capital costs shall also include payment of principal of and interest on bonds, notes, or other obligations issued by the District to finance capital costs.

(C) Operating Costs

Operating costs shall include all costs not included in capital costs as defined in Subsection IV (B), but including interest on temporary notes issued by the District in anticipation of revenue.

(D) Apportionment of Capital Costs

Capital costs shall be apportioned annually in December for the ensuing calendar year as follows:

- (1) Each member municipality's share of the capital costs incurred for constructing and originally equipping and furnishing the initial school facilities of the District shall be determined by computing the ratio which the sum of its resident pupil enrollments on October 1 of the three years next preceding the year in which the Committee first votes to authorize the incurring of such capital costs bears to the sum of the resident pupil enrollments of all the member municipalities on October 1 of the same three years.
- (2) A ratio for apportioning capital costs other than those apportioned pursuant to clause (1) of this subsection, whether or not incurred in connection with the construction of an addition to or the reconstruction, replacement, remodeling of or making extraordinary repairs to said initial school facilities of the District, shall be established

with respect to each authorization for the incurring of such other capital costs. Each member municipality's share of the capital costs incurred under a particular authorization shall be determined by computing the ratio which the sum of its pupil enrollments in the regional district school on October 1 of the three years next preceding the year in which the Committee votes to authorize the incurring of such capital costs bears to the sum of the pupil enrollments of all the member municipalities in the regional district school On October 1 of the same three years. In the event a member municipality has no enrollment in the regional district school in one or more of the said three years, such municipality's share shall be determined on the basis of the resident pupil enrollments for it and the other member municipalities on October 1 of the same three years; and the balance of the capital costs shall be apportioned among the other municipalities on the basis of their pupil enrollments in the regional district school in accordance with the preceding sentence.

- (3) The term “resident pupil enrollments” as it is used in Clauses (1) and (2) of this subsection, shall mean the number of pupils residing in a member municipality who are enrolled in grades one through twelve, inclusive, of any public, private or parochial school, wherever located.

(E) Apportionment of Operating Costs

All operating costs, except those described in Subsection IV (F), for the first calendar year next following the establishment of the regional school district, and for every calendar year thereafter, shall be apportioned to the member municipalities on the basis of each municipality’s respective pupil enrollment in the regional district school. Each member municipality’s share for each calendar year shall be determined by computing the ratio which that member municipality’s pupil enrollment in the regional district school on October 1 of the year next preceding the year for which the apportionment is determined bears to the total pupil enrollment in the regional district school from all the member municipalities on the same date. In computing this apportionment, the pupil hours referred to in Subsection IV (F) shall be excluded. In

the event that enrollment of pupils in the regional district school has not been accomplished by October 1 of any year, operating costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the number of pupils residing in each member municipality and enrolled in grades one through twelve, inclusive, of any public, private or parochial school wherever located, on October 1 of that year.

(F) Special Operating Costs

The Committee shall determine the operating costs for each calendar year of any evening trade extension courses or any other types of courses which are offered by the District to persons other than the pupils attending the regular day regional vocational school. Each member municipality's share of such operating costs shall be determined by computing the ratio which that municipality's enrollment of pupil hours in such courses on November 1 of the year next preceding the year for which the apportionment is determined bears to the total enrollment of pupil hours in such courses from all the member municipalities on the same date. In the event that enrollment of pupil hours in such courses has not been accomplished by November 1 of any year, such operating costs shall be apportioned on the basis of the number of pupils residing in each member municipality and enrolled in grades one through twelve, inclusive, of any public, private or parochial school, wherever located, on October 1 of that year.

(G) Times of Payment of Apportioned Costs

Each member municipality shall pay to the District in each year its proportional share, certified as provided in

Subsection V (C), of the capital and operating costs. Except as otherwise provided in Subsection V (A), the annual share of each member municipality shall be paid in such amounts and at such times that at least the following percentages of such annual share shall be paid on or before the dates indicated respectively:

| | |
|--------------|------|
| April 1 | 25% |
| June 1 | 60% |
| September 15 | 75% |
| November 15 | 100% |

SECTION V - BUDGET

(A) Initial Budget

Within sixty days after the initial Regional District School Committee is organized, it shall prepare a reasonable detailed operating and maintenance budget covering expenses, if any, for the balance of the then calendar year. Copies of such proposed budget shall be submitted to the chairman of the finance or advisory committee of each member town and to the mayor of the city of Marlborough for their consideration. A budget shall be adopted not earlier than fourteen days but within twenty-one days after the proposed budget has been so submitted. The amount of the said budget shall be apportioned among the member municipalities according to the provisions of Section IV herein. The Regional District Treasurer shall certify to the Treasurer of each member municipality its respective share of said budget. The sums thus certified shall be payable by the member municipalities to the Regional

District School Committee but only from funds which may be or may have been appropriated by the member municipalities for such purpose.

(B) Tentative Operating and Maintenance Budget

Thereafter, the Committee shall annually prepare a tentative operating and maintenance budget for the ensuing calendar year, attaching thereto provision for any installment of principal or interest to become due in such year on any bonds or other evidence of indebtedness of the District and any other capital costs to be apportioned to the member municipalities. On or before November 15, the said Committee shall submit to the mayor of the city of Marlborough and the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen and the Chairman of the Finance or Advisory Committee of the member towns a copy of such tentative operating and maintenance budget which shall be itemized as follows or be in such further detail as the Regional District School Committee may deem advisable.

1. Administration
2. Instruction
3. Other school services
4. Operation and maintenance of plant
5. Fixed charges
6. Community services
7. Acquisition of fixed assets
8. Debt retirement and debt service
9. Programs with other districts and private schools

(C) Final Operating and Maintenance Budget

The Committee shall adopt an annual operating and maintenance budget, including debt and interest charges and any other current capital costs as separate items, on or before December 1 for the ensuing calendar year, and the said Committee shall

apportion the amounts necessary to be raised in order to meet the said budget in accordance with the provisions of Subsections IV (D), IV (E), and IV (F). The amounts so apportioned to each member municipality shall, prior to December 31 of each year preceding the calendar year to which said budget relates, be certified by the District Treasurer to the Treasurer of each member municipality, and each municipality shall appropriate the amounts so certified.

SECTION VI - TRANSPORTATION

School transportation shall be provided by the regional school district and the cost thereof shall be apportioned to the member municipalities as an operating cost.

SECTION VII - AMENDMENTS

(A) Limitations

This agreement may be amended from time to time in the manner hereinafter provided, but no amendment shall be made which shall substantially impair the rights of the holders of any bonds, notes, or other obligations of the District then outstanding, or the rights of the District to procure the means for payment thereof, provided that nothing in this section shall prevent the admission of a new town or towns to the District and the reapportionment accordingly of capital costs of the District represented by bonds or notes of the District then outstanding and of interest thereon.

(B) Procedure

Any proposal for amendment, except a proposal for amendment providing for the withdrawal of a member municipality (which shall be acted upon as provided in Section IX), may be initiated by a two-thirds vote of all the members of the Committee or by a petition signed by 10 percent of the registered voters of any one of the member municipalities. In the latter case, said petition shall contain, at the end thereof, a certification by the Town or City Clerk of such member municipality as to the number of registered voters in said municipality according to the most recent voting list and the number of signatures on the petition which appear to be the names of registered voters of said municipality and said petition shall be presented to the Secretary of the Committee. In either case, the Secretary of the Committee shall mail or deliver a notice in writing to the board of selectmen of each of the member towns and to the City Council of Marlborough that a proposal to amend this agreement has been made and shall enclose a copy of such proposal (without the signatures in the case of a proposal by petition). The selectmen of each member town shall include in the warrant for the next annual or a special town meeting called for the purpose an article stating the proposal or the substance thereof. Such amendment shall take effect upon its acceptance by all of the member municipalities, acceptance by each town to be by a majority vote at a town meeting as aforesaid and acceptance by the city of Marlborough to be by a majority vote of its city council.

SECTION VIII - ADMISSION OF ADDITIONAL TOWNS TO THE DISTRICT

By an amendment of this agreement adopted under and in accordance with Section VII above, any other town or towns may be admitted to the regional school district upon adoption as therein provided of such amendment and upon acceptance by the town or towns seeking admission of the agreement as so amended and also upon compliance with such provisions of law as may be applicable and such terms as may be set forth in such an amendment.

SECTION IX - WITHDRAWAL

(A) Limitations

The withdrawal of a member municipality from the District may be effected by an amendment to this agreement in the manner hereinafter provided by this section.

Any member municipality seeking to withdraw shall, by a majority vote at an annual or special town meeting in the case of a town or by a vote of a majority of the members in office of the City Council in the case of the city of Marlborough, request the Committee to draw up an amendment to this agreement setting forth the terms by which such municipality may withdraw from the District, provided that the said municipality shall remain liable to the District for its share of the indebtedness of the District outstanding at the time of such withdrawal, and for interest thereon, to the same extent and in the same manner as though the municipality had not withdrawn from the District.

(B) Procedure

The clerk of the municipality seeking to withdraw shall notify the Committee in writing that such municipality has voted to request the Committee to draw up an amendment to the agreement (enclosing a certified copy of such vote).

Thereupon, the Committee shall draw up an amendment to the agreement setting forth such terms of withdrawal as it deems advisable, subject to the limitation contained in Subsection VII (A). The secretary of the Committee shall mail or deliver a notice in writing to the Board of Selectmen of each member town and to the City Council of the city of Marlborough that the Committee has drawn up an amendment to the agreement providing for the withdrawal of a member municipality (enclosing a copy of such amendment). The selectmen of each member town shall include in the warrant for the next annual or a special town meeting called for the purpose an article stating the amendment or the substance thereof. Such amendment shall take effect upon its acceptance by all of the member municipalities, acceptance by each town to be by a majority vote at a town meeting as aforesaid and acceptance by the city of Marlborough to be by a vote of a majority of the members in office of its city council.

(C) Cessation of Terms of Office of Withdrawing Municipality's Members

Upon the effective date of withdrawal, the terms of office of all members serving on the Regional District School Committee from the withdrawing municipality shall terminate and the total membership of the Committee shall be decreased accordingly.

(D) Apportionment of Capital Costs After Withdrawal

The withdrawing municipality's annual share of any future installment of principal and interest on obligations outstanding on the effective date of its withdrawal shall be fixed at the percentage prevailing for such municipality at the last annual apportionment made next prior to the effective date of the withdrawal.

The remainder of any such installment, after subtracting the share of any municipality or municipalities which have withdrawn, shall be apportioned to the remaining member municipalities in the manner provided in Subsection IV (D) or as may be otherwise provided in the amendment providing for such withdrawal.

SECTION X - ADMISSION OF PUPILS RESIDING OUTSIDE THE
DISTRICT

The Committee may accept for enrollment in the regional district school, pupils from municipalities other than the member municipalities on a tuition basis. Income received by the District from tuition pupils shall be deducted from the total operating costs in the next annual budget to be prepared after the receipt thereof, prior to apportionment under Section IV to the member municipalities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this agreement has been executed as
of the 28TH day of AUGUST, 1967.

VOCATIONAL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT PLANNING BOARD

Ruth L. Harpin
Basel C. Kimball
Michael K. Gudravyt
Hubert W. Yankee
Walter T. Pulsifer
John J. Farrell
Walter E. Turner
Donald B. Thompson
Reinold M. Fante
Thomas F. Fitzpatrick
Frank D. Walther
George E. Lee
Paul L. Foster
Annie A. Settling
Mary C. Mead, Maynard
Genneth L. Peirce

APPROVED:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Education

By D. D. Fierman
SEP 13 1967

Westborough
Westborough
Westborough
Northford
Northborough
Southborough
Marlboro
Boylston
Marlborough
Maynard
Marlborough
Stearns
Hudson
Hudson
Berlin

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Emergency Finance Board

By Bernard Blum
Walter B. Smith
Ruth Alexander
Arthur H. MacLennan

SEP 7 1967

ASSABET VALLEY REGIONAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 510 of the Acts of 1970, we hereby notify you that the following amendment to the Agreement with respect to the establishment of a Vocational Regional School District ratified by the City of Marlborough, and the towns of Berlin, Hudson, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough and Westborough, was adopted by the School Committee by unanimous vote on November 14, 1972, all members present and voting.

Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement for the Establishment of the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 510 of the Acts of 1970, the Agreement entered into among the City of Marlborough and the towns of Berlin, Hudson, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, and Westborough, Massachusetts, pursuant to which the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District was established and now operates is hereby amended by adding at the end the following Section XI:

Section XI Fiscal Year and Times of Payment of Apportioned Costs:

The fiscal year or period of the District shall be the same as the fiscal period of the member city and towns as provided by law, and the word calendar year or fiscal year as it relates in this Agreement to a fiscal or budget year shall mean the fiscal year of the District. (Section IV (D) (E) (F) and Section V (B) (C))

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section IV G of this agreement, the dates on or before which the respective percentage of the annual share of costs of the District apportioned to each member city and town shall be paid shall be as follows:

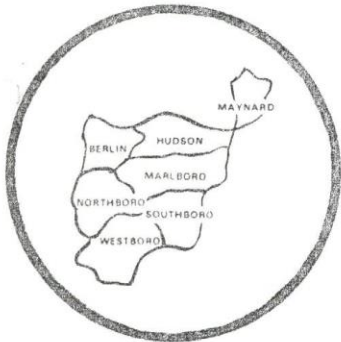
| | | |
|--------------|---|------|
| September 15 | - | 25% |
| December 15 | - | 50% |
| March 15 | - | 75% |
| June 15 | - | 100% |

provided, however, that for the fiscal period beginning January 1, 1973, and ending June 30, 1974, the dates on or before which the respective percentages of the costs of the District for said period apportioned to each member city and town shall be paid shall be as follows:

| | | |
|--------------|---|-----|
| March 15 | - | 1/6 |
| June 15 | - | 1/6 |
| September 15 | - | 1/6 |
| December 15 | - | 1/6 |
| March 15 | - | 1/6 |
| June 15 | - | 1/6 |

This Section shall be effective only to the extent that Chapter 849 of the Acts of 1969 as amended shall be in effect.

Reinelde M. Poole
Attest: Reinelde M. Poole, Secretary
Assabet Valley Regional Vocational
School District



Assabet Valley Regional
Vocational District
School Committee

August 6, 1974

Accepted : amendment #1

Be it enacted by the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational District School Committee assembled August 5, 1974 and by the authority of same according to Chapter 513 of the Acts of 1966 and Chapter 1025 of the Acts of 1973; as follows:

Section V, of the Agreement With Respect To the Establishment Of A Vocational Regional School District.

Paragraph (B) by striking out November 15 and inserting in place December 15.

Paragraph (C) by striking out the first date, December 1, and inserting in place, January 10 and by striking out the second date, December 31 and inserting in place, January 31.

That the city clerk of the city of Marlborough and the town clerks of the other member municipalities be notified to affix this document to the original Agreement ratified by the member communities when the District was established.

Signed and Sealed:

Herbert L. Cobb
Herbert L. Cobb, Chairman

Paul F. Hester
Paul Hester, Vice-Chairman

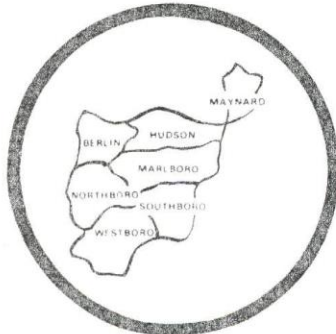
Reinelde M. Poole
Reinelde M. Poole, Secretary

Dean A. Goodwin
Dean Goodwin

Ruth L. Harpin
Ruth Harpin

Robert Kingsbury
Robert Kingsbury

Charles F. Thomas
Charles Thomas



*Assabet Valley Regional
Vocational District
School Committee*

September 10, 1974

Accepted Amendment #2

Be it enacted by the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational District School Committee assembled September 9, 1974 and by the authority of same according to Chapter 513 of the Acts of 1966 and Chapter 1025 of the Acts of 1973; as follows:

Section IV, of the Agreement With Respect To The Establishment of A Vocational Regional School District.

Paragraph (G) by striking out April 1, 25%; June 1, 60%; September 15, 75%; November 1, 100%; and inserting in place September 1, 25%; December 1, 50%; March 1, 75%; and June 1, 100%.

That the city clerk of the city of Marlborough and the town clerks of the other member municipalities be notified to affix this document to the original Agreement ratified by the member communities when the District was established.

Signed and Sealed:

Herbert L. Cobb
Herbert L. Cobb, Chairman

Paul F. Hester
Paul Hester, Vice-Chairman

Reinelde M. Poole
Reinelde M. Poole, Secretary

Dean Goodwin
Dean Goodwin

Ruth Harpin
Ruth Harpin

Robert Kingsbury
Robert Kingsbury

Charles Thomas
Charles Thomas

Vocational Technical School Enrollment



SPS - Assabet Vocational Regional
Technical High School Enrollment
Oct 1, 2021

| Grade | Students |
|-------|----------|
| 9 | 12 |
| 10 | 34 |
| 11 | 20 |
| 12 | 30 |
| Total | 96 |