

Winthrop Public Schools

Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy

(In compliance with Massachusetts Regulation 603 CMR 4.00)

Effective Date: November 1, 2025

Next Review/Update: 2026 - 2027 School Year

Approved by: **Winthrop Public School's School Committee**

Overview

In accordance with 603 CMR 4.00, Winthrop Public Schools (WPS) maintains this Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy to ensure all middle school students gain awareness of, and exposure to career technical education (CTE) schools and programs available through in-district, regional, agricultural, and other public high school opportunities.

This policy outlines how WPS will:

1. Collaborate with regional CTE and agricultural schools to inform students of available pathways.
2. Provide equitable opportunities for all middle school students to tour CTE programs during regular school hours.
3. Integrate CTE awareness into students' academic and career planning via the My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP) process.

I. Statement of Goals

Winthrop Middle School is committed to helping students begin meaningful career exploration in alignment with the state's Career Development Education (CDE) Framework. Our goals are to:

- Support all students in exploring a variety of high school, postsecondary, and career pathway options.
- Promote equitable access to information about CTE and vocational opportunities for every student and family.
- Strengthen the connection between middle school learning, MyCAP activities, and future career planning.
- Foster self-awareness, decision-making, and goal-setting skills through structured exploration experiences.

II. High School Pathway Options Available to Students

WPS students may access CTE programs through the following institutions:

- In-District: Winthrop High School — The Viking Longships Project, Digital Video Production I & II, Digital Photography/Graphic Design, STEAM, Computer Science (CP, Honors, AP), Child Growth and Development

- Regional Technical School: Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School
- Agricultural School: Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School (only for technical programs not offered by Northeast)

These options allow students to pursue programs that align with their interests and postsecondary aspirations. Through the MyCAP process, students will make explicit connections between their interests, skills, and these pathway options.

III. Middle School Career Exploration

Integration with MyCAP

Career awareness and planning are embedded within Winthrop Middle School's MyCAP implementation. Students in grades 6–8 will participate in:

- Grade 6: Self-awareness and career interest inventories (e.g. MassHire 360).
- Grade 7: Career clusters exploration and introduction to local high school and technical pathways.
- Grade 8: Postsecondary planning activities and reflection tied to high school course selection and pathway interest areas.

See Appendix A: MyCAP Scope and Sequence by Grade Level.

Awareness of High School Options

Winthrop Middle School provides multiple opportunities for students and families to learn about high school options, including:

- CTE Information Sessions & Presentations.
- Printed and Digital Materials are distributed to students and families by November 1 each year.
- Parent/Guardian Outreach via newsletters.
- School Counselor Support integrated with MyCAP lessons.
- Supplying our district's CTE school with 8th grade mailing addresses so they can contact families by October 15 each year.

Collaboration with CTE Schools

WMS collaborates annually with Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational High School to schedule presentations, provide updated admissions materials, and coordinate student tours. WMS collaborates annually with Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School to provide updated admissions materials and notification of open house/how to schedule a student tour.

IV. Middle School CTE Tour Policy

- All WMS students will have the opportunity to tour a regional or agricultural CTE school during regular school hours.
- The hosting CTE school will assume transportation costs.
- Students will be given an excused absence when the hosting school confirms participation.

- Tours will be accessible to all students, including those with disabilities or language barriers.

V. Providing Records to CTE Schools and Programs

During the admissions process, Winthrop Middle School will provide required student records (grades, attendance, etc.) to CTE schools upon request, consistent with FERPA and DESE regulations, ensuring parental consent when required.

VI. Maintenance of Records

WMS will maintain documentation of student participation in tours, annual dissemination of information, MyCAP completion records, interest surveys, and DESE attestations. All records will be securely stored and shared as required.

Appendix A: MyCAP Scope and Sequence by Grade Level

Grade	Focus Area	Sample Activities	Connection to Pathway Exploration
Grade 6	Self-Awareness	Interest inventories, skills surveys	Identifying personal strengths/interests
Grade 7	Career Awareness	Introduction to 16 Career Clusters	Exploring CTE and vocational programs
Grade 8	Career & Academic Planning	MyCAP reflection, pathway exploration	Selecting courses and pathways aligned with goals

Annual Review and Public Posting

This policy will be reviewed annually, updated as needed, and:

- Posted on the Winthrop Public Schools website.
- Made available in print upon request.
- Accompanied by an annual attestation submitted to DESE verifying implementation.