

MIDDLE SCHOOL PATHWAY EXPLORATION POLICY

Statement of Goals

Ipswich Middle School is committed to providing all students with a comprehensive and equitable educational experience that prepares them for success in high school and beyond. This policy is designed to ensure that all middle school students are made aware of and gain exposure to the diverse array of high school pathway options available to them, with a specific focus on career technical education (CTE) schools and programs.

Our goals are to:

- Equip students with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their academic and career pathways.
- Connect career exploration and career-connected learning to a student's broader academic and postsecondary planning.
- Foster a culture of career readiness and exploration within our middle school.
- Ensure equitable access for all students to information about high school options, regardless of their background or academic performance.

High School Pathway Options

Students in our district have access to the following high school pathway options:

- Our district's comprehensive high school, Ipswich High School
- The regional vocational technical high school, Whittier Vocational Technical High School
- The agricultural high school, Essex Northshore Agricultural and Technical High School

The district will implement the following activities to inform middle school students about their high school options:

- **Collaboration with CTE Schools:** Middle school staff will collaborate with admissions and guidance staff from the CTE schools and programs listed above. This collaboration will ensure that middle school students receive timely and accurate information about CTE opportunities.
- **Information Dissemination:** By October 15 of each school year, the district will provide students and parents with information about high school options, including CTE programs. This will be done through various means, including:
 - Presentations by high school staff at our middle school.
 - Newsletters to parents/guardians.
- **Career-Connected Learning:** The district will integrate career-connected learning into its curriculum through a Guidance Counselor led lesson centering on strengths and interests and linking those to future career choices and the steps required to achieve the students' goals including secondary school options and the possibility of attending a CTE school.

CTE Tour Policies

The district will ensure that all middle school students are provided with an opportunity to tour CTE schools and programs during regular school hours. The following procedures will be followed:

- **Tour Opportunities:** The district will coordinate with CTE schools to schedule tour dates for middle school students.
- **Transportation:** The transportation costs for these tours will be assumed by the school hosting the tour, as per state regulation.
- **Attendance:** Students who participate in a confirmed tour will not receive an unexcused absence. The host school or program will provide confirmation of the student's participation to the middle school.
- **Parent/Guardian Communication:** Parents/guardians will be notified in advance of tour opportunities and will be required to provide permission for their child to attend.

Providing Records to CTE Schools

During the admission process, the district will provide all information to CTE schools and programs as required by state regulation, including:

- Student transcripts
- Attendance records
- Disciplinary records
- Any other required information for the admissions process, with appropriate consent and adherence to all student privacy laws.

Maintenance of Records

The district will maintain documentation of student participation in tours and other elements of this policy's implementation, such as:

- Records of shared contact information with CTE schools.
- Schedules of CTE tours and student participation.

This policy will be made available on the district website and written copies will be provided to students and parents upon request. An annual attestation that the policy has been implemented will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

SOURCE: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

ADOPTED: October, 2025