

# **Bristol County Agricultural High School**

## **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

September 14, 2022

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*This policy is available in multiple languages upon request, or by using the translate feature of your browser. You may also click to download the policy [here](#).*

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

An admission process is necessary in vocational/agricultural technical schools where space is a limiting factor. Vocational/Agricultural technical laboratories (shops) are designed and equipped to serve the maximum number of students that can safely be accommodated. All applicants to grades nine through eleven at Bristol County Agricultural High School (hereafter BCAHS) will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy. The Board of Trustees of Bristol County Agricultural High School approved this policy on November 24, 2021.

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

The BCAHS admits students and makes available to them its advantages, privileges, and courses of study without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, gender identity, homelessness, or sexual orientation.

Applicants with limited English proficiency will have a qualified representative from BCAHS support the applicant in completing the necessary forms and assist in interpreting during the entire application and admissions process. BCAHS has an online application that is adaptable to languages other than English. Please contact the Admissions Office at [admissions@bcahs.com](mailto:admissions@bcahs.com) or 508-668-6747, ext 3203 if you have questions or need help filling out the application form.

Students with disabilities may voluntarily self-identify for the purpose of requesting reasonable accommodations during the entire application and admission process.

Information on limited English proficiency and disability submitted voluntarily by the applicant, for the purpose of receiving assistance and accommodations during the entire application and admission process, will not impact their chances of admission.

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, BCAHS 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 and demographic profile.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

Any eighth, ninth or tenth-grade student who is a resident of Bristol County and anticipates being promoted to the grade they seek to enter by his/her local school district is eligible to apply for fall admission or admission during the school year provided that space is available. All applicants will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this admission policy. Admission of non-resident students will be entirely dependent upon the applicant's ranking.

Transfer students from other vocational and agricultural technical schools are eligible to apply for fall admission or admission during the school year to grades 9-11 at BCAHS provided they expect to be promoted to the grade they seek to enter by their current school. Transfer students will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

#### **NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS**

Non-residents of Bristol County may apply for fall admission or admission during the school year subject to the availability of openings. This is also contingent upon promotion by their sending school district to the grade they seek to enter. Non-resident students will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy. A nonresident student seeking admission to BCAHS in grades 9 and 10, under M.G.L. c.74 Sections 7 and 7C must follow the admission process outlined in this Admissions Policy. All nonresidents will be evaluated and ranked using the criteria set forth in this Admissions Policy.

Students who begin their enrollment as in-county residents and move out-of-county during their enrollment, who request to remain at BCAHS as nonresidents under M.G.L. c74, 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 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education *Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process* located at: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/cvte/admissions/>.

In all cases, Out of County Students must file an application for admission and a Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Application (located at: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/cvte/admissions/>) no later than March 15th of the preceding school year with the Admissions Office for completion of Part I and Part II. In addition, By April 1 of the preceding school year, the non-resident student must forward the application to the Superintendent of the student's district of residence for Completion of Part III in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Education Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process pursuant to M.G.L. c.74 located at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/ccte/cvte/admissions/>. Upon receipt, the Superintendent of the

student's district of residence must either indicate approval or disapproval of the application. The application must be returned to the Admissions Office within ten (10) business days.

The student's parent/guardian or school that has been denied Out of County access by the district of residence may request that the Commissioner review the denial of tuition. The application. And supporting documents must be submitted in writing to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for review no later than May 1 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 BCAHS as nonresidents under M.G.L. c.74 Sections 7 and 7C.

### **STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE**

BCAHS will accept students living in foster care according to the selection criteria contained in this Admissions Policy. Once accepted and enrolled, irrespective of the location of a foster care placement, students in foster care will continue to attend BCAHS, unless after a collaborative decision-making process with the Department of Children and Family Services, it is determined to be in the student's best interest to enroll in and attend school in the district in which the student resides in foster care. Enrollment of students in the district where they reside in foster care will take place immediately upon such a determination.

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

Students who are homeless will be accepted to BCAHS according to the selection criteria contained in this admissions policy.

### **SCHOOL CHOICE**

BCAHS does not participate in the inter-district school choice program.

### **REGIONAL AGREEMENTS**

BCAHS does not have a predetermined city/town quota in regard to the number of students accepted from sending communities.

### **HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS**

Students who are formally homeschooled may apply for admission to BCAHS, provided all admissions policy criteria are followed. Homeschooled students will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants. The homeschool students' parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a copy of the Home School Approval Letter from the local school superintendent. When an official transcript is not available, grade level work and a printed representative sample or

portfolio of the student's body of work in English language arts or its equivalent, math, science, and social studies must be submitted. Additionally, two letters of recommendation (not related to student), including one from someone knowledgeable of the student's academic ability.

### **TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Students already participating in Chapter 74 programs at another school may apply for admission to BCAHS and will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants. Transfer students will only be accepted until the end of the first quarter of Grade 10. Please contact the Admissions Office at (508) 669-6744 Ext. 3203 with any questions.

### **STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN EXPELLED**

Students who have been expelled from school pursuant to General Law Chapter 71, Section 37H of the Educational Reform Act of 1993, are not eligible to apply for admission to BCAHS.

### **LATE APPLICATIONS**

BCAHS accepts applications for the upcoming school year until July 15th. Applications received after this date will be evaluated for the following school year, unless availability remains in the current school year class.

## **IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

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

It is the responsibility of the BCAHS Superintendent to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures required to admit and enroll applicants in conformity with the admission policy.

BCAHS has an Admission Committee appointed by the President of the Board of Trustees and chaired by a member of the Board of Trustees.

The committee may be composed of representatives of the administration, guidance, special education, vocational programs, and academic programs. Responsibilities of the Admissions Committee include:

- determination of standards for admission
- development and implementation of admission procedures
- processing of applications

- ranking of students
- acceptance of students according to the procedure and criteria in the admission policy
- establishment and maintenance of a waiting list of acceptable candidates

The BCAHS Admissions Coordinator is responsible for disseminating information about the school through visits to local middle/junior high schools, local school assemblies and press releases, and for collecting applications and documentation from the sending schools.

## V. STUDENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

BCAHS disseminates information about the school through a variety of methods.

- Visitations are scheduled between September and January and include an informational, multimedia presentation to 7th and 8th-grade classes.
- Annual on-campus events open to the public, such as, but not limited to Fall Show, Open Houses, and Spring Expo.
- Regularly scheduled group tours are available to sign up through the school's website.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may schedule individual visits at a mutually convenient time.
- Brochures, which describe vocational technical programs, academic courses, sports, cooperative education, extracurricular activities, and special education resources, are distributed during the 8th-grade visitations.
- A calendar of events is maintained at [www.bristolaggie.com](http://www.bristolaggie.com), along with information on the admissions process, and other program information.

## VI. APPLICATION PROCESS

### FALL ADMISSION\* TO THE NINTH GRADE

- Students interested in applying to BCAHS for fall admission to the ninth grade must:
  - Complete the electronic application which can be found online at [www.bristolaggie.com](http://www.bristolaggie.com). Sending school Guidance Counselors will automatically be notified requesting the additional documentation.
  - Obtain a hard copy application from their local school guidance counselor as early in the school year as possible or by contacting the Admission Coordinator at [admissions@bristolaggie.com](mailto:admissions@bristolaggie.com) or 508-668-6747 at 3203.
  - Hard copy applications must be returned to the sending school guidance counselor by the deadline set by the guidance counselor/school representative.
  - The deadline for Early Action student applications for ninth grade is November 1st. The deadline for Regular applications for ninth grade is January 1st.**

It is the responsibility of the local school guidance counselors/school representative to:

1. forward the completed applications and the required supporting documentation to the Admission Coordinator at BCAHS by November 1st or January 1st.
  - a. Complete applications include:
    - (i) Completed application form (including required e-signatures)
    - (ii) End of year report card for grade 7 and report card from first semester/trimester of grade 8
    - (iii) Record of unexcused absences from sending school for grade 7 and term one of grade 8
    - (iv) Record of behavior incidents involving 37H, 37 H1/2 and 37H3/4 from grade 7 and term one of grade 8
    - (v) Recommendation Form completed by a sending school representative chosen by the applicant.

<b>A COMPLETED APPLICATION INCLUDES</b>	
1. Completed application form (including required e-signature of a parent/guardian)	
2a. Required records for current year	2b. Required records for previous year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Report card for most current semester/trimester</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● End of year report card</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attendance records showing unexcused absences through the most recent marking period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attendance records showing unexcused absences for the entire year</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discipline records indicating the number, duration, and type of suspension (if applicable) through the most recent report card</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discipline records indicating the number, duration, and type of suspension (if applicable) for the entire school year</li> </ul>
3. Recommendation form from a sending school representative, chosen by the student	
4. Interview with BCAHS Admissions Committee Representative	

**FALL ADMISSION FOR TENTH GRADE\***

\*applying for admission for the following school year

A. Students interested in applying to BCAHS for fall admission to the tenth grades must:

1. Complete the electronic application which can be found online at [www.bristolaggie.com](http://www.bristolaggie.com). Sending school Guidance Counselors will automatically be notified requesting the additional documentation.
2. Obtain a hard copy application from their local school guidance counselor as early in the school year as possible or by contacting the Admission Coordinator at [admissions@bristolaggie.com](mailto:admissions@bristolaggie.com) or 508-668-6747 at 3203.
3. Hard copy applications must be returned to the sending school guidance counselor by the deadline set by the guidance counselor/school representative.
4. **The deadline for student applications for the tenth grade is June 1st.**

It is the responsibility of the local school guidance counselors/school representative to

B. Forward the completed applications and the required supporting documentation to the Admission Coordinator at BCAHS by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

1. Complete applications include:
  - (i) Completed application form (including required e-signatures).
  - (ii) End of year report card for grade 8 and report card from first semester/trimester of grade 9
  - (iii) Record of unexcused absences from sending school for previous school year and term one current school year
  - (iv) For applications to grade ten (fall admission), the last four years of behavior incidents involving 37H, 37 H1/2, and 37H3/4.
  - (v) Recommendation Form completed by a sending school representative chosen by the applicant.

TRANSFER STUDENTS - FOR ADMISSION TO THE NINTH GRADES FOR THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR\*

\*applying for admission during the school year to begin classes during the same school year, as opposed to applying for admission one school year to begin classes the next school year in the fall.

A. Students interested in applying to BCAHS for admission for the current school year must:

1. Complete the online admissions application or obtain an application from their local school guidance counselor.
2. Return the completed application form to their local school guidance counselor by the deadline set by the guidance counselor.
3. Attend an interview at the BCAHS. If the applicant or parent/guardian cannot provide transportation, a representative from BCAHS will go to the local school to interview the applicant.
4. Applications for transfer students can be received at any time during the year.

B. It is the responsibility of the local school guidance counselors to



1. forward the completed applications and/or required supporting documentation to the Admission Coordinator at BCAHS.
  - a. Complete applications include
    - i. A completed application form (electronic or hardcopy with required signatures).
    - ii. End of year report card for previous school year and most current report card for current school year
    - iii. Summary of unexcused absences for the prior and current school year to the date of the application
    - iv. The last two years of behavior incidents involving 37H, 37 H1/2 and 37H3/4.
    - v. Recommendation Form completed by a sending school representative chosen by the applicant.

#### INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS

- A. If incomplete applications are received, the following procedures will be followed:
  - b. The Admission Office will notify the applicant's Guidance Counselor/school designee responsible for submitting the application that the application is incomplete. This notification will specify what is needed for completion.
  - c. The applicant's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by our Admission Office in the event that the problem is not resolved by the applicant's Guidance Counselor/school designee. The notification specifies what part(s) of the application are missing.
  - d. If after notifying the applicant's Guidance Counselor/school designee and parent(s)/guardian(s), the application remains incomplete for ten school days, the application will be placed on 'inactive' status, until such time as the additional information is received.

#### LATE APPLICATIONS

For Fall Admission, applications received after January 1st will be evaluated using the same criteria as other applications and their composite scores will be integrated in rank order on the established waiting list.

#### WITHDRAWN STUDENTS

Ninth-grade students who withdraw from BCAHS may re-apply for tenth grade following the procedures contained in this Admission Policy and will be evaluated using the criteria contained herein.

## HOMESCHOOL STUDENTS

Students who are formally homeschooled may apply for admission to BCAHS, including admission during the school year, provided all admission criteria are followed. The homeschooled student's parent(s)/guardian(s) must submit a copy of the homeschool approval letter from the local school superintendent, provide documentation showing the approval of the curriculum, and provide evidence of work reflecting state benchmarks.

Students who are homeschooled may apply for admission to BCAHS, including admission during the school year, provided all admissions policy criteria are followed:

- a) The homeschooled student must submit a copy of the "Home School Approval letter" from the local superintendent.
- b) If grades are not available, a representative sample portfolio of the student's body of work in English, math, science, and social studies must be submitted.
- c) Homeschooled students will be scored on their portfolio/grades (40%), two letters of recommendation from non-family members (10%), and an interview with BCAHS staff (50%).
- d) If the student has also attended school at any time within the three years of applying, those records will be submitted as well.
- e) In addition the student can submit any other materials, not stated above, that may help support their admission to BCAHS

## VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

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

### A. Attendance Record: **5 points possible**

A maximum of 10 points derived from the total number of unexcused absences from the previous full year and first trimester or first semester for the current school year.

\*Excessive absences will be evaluated by the Admissions Coordinator.

Unexcused Absence in the previous school year and current year to date

<b>Days of Unexcused Absence</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>
0-6 days absent	5 points
7-12 days absent	3 points
13+ days absent	0 points

**B. Conduct Record: 20 points possible**  
 Cumulative for the previous school year and current year to date

Cumulative Days of suspension	Points Awarded
0 - 10 days of suspension	20 points
10+ days of suspension for 37H <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	10 points
Any 37H & 37H <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> incident	0 points

For applications to Grade 9 (fall admission), the sum of Grade 7 and Term 1 of Grade 8 discipline records from the sending school are used. For applications to Grade 10 (fall admission), the sum of the previous school year and Term 1 of the current school year’s discipline records from the sending school are used. For applications to Grades 9 and 10 (admission during the school year), the school discipline records from the five previous completed terms will be used.

Discipline referrals include suspensions and exclusions that were imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 37H or 37H <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, or for which suspension or expulsion for more than 10 days was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 37H <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.

Any student whose application indicates disciplinary infractions resulting in 0 (zero) awarded points will be given the opportunity to present mitigating evidence and an explanation of the suspension(s), in writing to the principal. The principal will have the authority to adjust the awarded points according to the following guidelines.

- Evidence provides a reasonable explanation and assurance of changed behavior: 10 points
- Evidence provides a limited explanation and partial assurance of changed behavior: 5 points
- Evidence does not provide a reasonable assurance of changed behavior: 0 points

**C. Interview: 45 points possible**

The interview will be given by a member of the BCAHS Admission Team. Interviews may take place at the sending school or on the BCAHS campus when necessary.

**D. Recommendation: 5 points possible**

A maximum of 5 points is derived from the recommendation of the sending school counselor and/or other sending school personnel who know the applicant best. An equitable



After a point total for each applicant has been determined, all applicants are placed in descending order based on their point total. Applicants are then accepted in order of the point total they have achieved. The applicant with the highest point total is accepted first, the applicant with the second highest point total is accepted second, and so on until all seats are filled. All applicants are accepted, or placed on a waiting list.

If openings occur within a grade level, the seats are filled by accepting applicants from the waiting list. These applicants are accepted in the order of their positions on the waiting list as determined by the total points given according to the selection criteria.

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

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

Upon notification from BCAHS indicating that the applicant was not accepted, the applicant may request a review of the decision by sending a letter to the Principal within ten working days of the notification. The principal will respond in writing to the letter with the findings of the review within ten working days. If after the review, the parent(s)/guardian(s) wishes to appeal the findings of the review, he/she can do so by submitting a request in writing to the superintendent/director within ten working days. The superintendent/director's decision will be final and will be communicated in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s) within ten working days of the notification of the appeal.

#### **X. ENROLLMENT**

The offer of admissions is conditional, and contingent upon applicants being promoted to the grade they wish to enter by their local school district, and receiving passing grades in Mathematics and English Language Arts. Students who are accepted and intend to enroll must notify BCAHS of their intentions within two weeks of the offer of admission. Students who do not respond by the deadline will be placed on the waiting list.

BCAHS reserves the right to revoke its acceptance of any student if the Admissions Committee determines that inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading information was presented during the Application process.

#### **XI. WAITING LIST**

The waiting list is only valid for the school year applied for and expires on October 1st of the new school year. All waitlisted applicants are eligible to re-apply for the subsequent school year, following the admissions policies above.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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