Gabriel Abbott Memorial School

Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy

Section 1: Statement of Goals

Gabriel Abbott Memorial School is committed to ensuring that all middle school students develop the knowledge, skills, and self-awareness necessary to make informed choices about their educational and career pathways. The district recognizes that early exposure to career and technical education (CTE) opportunities, combined with intentional academic and career planning, is essential for preparing students for success in high school and beyond.

Our goal is to provide equitable access to career exploration experiences that broaden students' understanding of the multiple pathways available after middle school. Through structured career-connected learning, alignment with the Massachusetts MyCAP (My Career and Academic Plan) framework, and collaboration with regional vocational and comprehensive high schools, Gabriel Abbott Memorial School will support students in:

- Identifying their interests, strengths, and aspirations;
- Exploring a range of high school and postsecondary options, including academic, technical, and vocational programs; and
- Making informed decisions about their future educational and career trajectories.

This policy affirms the district's belief that early career exploration fosters confident, purposeful learning and lays the foundation for lifelong success.

Section 2: High School Pathway Options

Students at Gabriel Abbott Memorial School have access to a variety of high school pathways designed to meet their diverse academic and career goals. These include both comprehensive and career technical education (CTE) options available through:

- **McCann Technical School**, offering state-approved Chapter 74 CTE programs across a wide range of occupational areas; and

- **Drury High School**, providing a comprehensive academic program with elective courses that support college and career readiness.

Through the My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP) framework, middle school students at Gabriel Abbott Memorial School explore their strengths, interests, and future aspirations in alignment with these high school options. Students participate in MyCAP activities during advisory sessions, guided by their teachers, to help them make informed decisions about their next steps in education and training.

To support this exploration, all middle school students will have the opportunity to tour both McCann Technical School and Drury High School during the school year. These visits give students the chance to experience learning environments firsthand, meet staff and students, and gain insight into the academic and career opportunities available.

By fostering these connections, Gabriel Abbott Memorial School links middle school experiences with future academic and career planning, ensuring that each student is empowered to make well-informed choices for their secondary education.

Section 3: Middle School Career Exploration

Gabriel Abbott Memorial School ensures that all students in Grades 6 through 8 participate in structured career exploration activities aligned with the Massachusetts My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP) framework. Through MyCAP, students develop self-awareness, explore potential career paths, and connect their interests and strengths to future educational opportunities.

Middle school teachers facilitate MyCAP activities during advisory sessions, guiding students through reflection, goal-setting, and the use of digital tools to explore career pathways. These experiences foster curiosity, build confidence, and help students understand the connection between their education and future career success.

To deepen awareness of secondary school options, including Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways, the district collaborates closely with McCann Technical School and Drury High School. Students and families receive up-to-date information about CTE pathways, program offerings, and admissions processes through multiple channels, including:

- Email communications
- District and school website postings
- Printed mailings and informational materials from partner schools

The district is committed to ensuring that all middle school students have access to accurate, timely, and developmentally appropriate information about their high school choices. Through this comprehensive and student-centered approach, Gabriel Abbott Memorial School empowers students to make informed decisions that align with their personal goals and aspirations, supporting their success in secondary and postsecondary pathways.

Section 4: Middle School CTE Tour Policies

Gabriel Abbott Memorial School is committed to ensuring that all middle school students have equitable access to explore Career Technical Education (CTE) opportunities. In alignment with state regulations, the district provides all Grade 8 students the opportunity to visit and experience both local high school options during the school year.

- **McCann Technical School**: The campus tour will take place in the fall of each academic year.

- **Drury High School**: The campus tour will occur in late winter.

These visits are scheduled during regular school hours to ensure full participation, with transportation provided and funded by the hosting schools.

In addition to the scheduled tours, all eighth-grade students are invited to participate in McCann Technical School's **after-school exploratory program**, held each fall. This program offers hands-on exposure to a range of technical programs, opportunities to meet instructors, and the chance to explore areas of personal interest more deeply.

Students who attend either the scheduled tours or the after-school exploratory program will be marked **excused** for any missed class time upon confirmation of attendance from the hosting school.

These opportunities help students make informed decisions about their educational pathways, deepen understanding of available CTE programs, and strengthen the connection between middle school learning and future career goals.

Section 5: Providing Records to CTE Schools and Programs

Gabriel Abbott Memorial School ensures that appropriate student information is shared with receiving Career Technical Education (CTE) schools and programs in compliance with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regulations and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The **principal** is responsible for initiating and overseeing the transmission of required student records to CTE schools during the admissions process. Prior to the McCann Technical School weighted lottery, the principal provides verified attendance information for each student applicant, as attendance is a contributing factor in the selection process.

Upon a student's acceptance to a high school or CTE program, the district provides additional documentation as permitted under FERPA and consistent with parental consent requirements. These records may include:

- Academic report cards or transcripts
- Discipline records
- 504 Plans or Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

All student information is transmitted securely and confidentially, ensuring that only the information necessary for enrollment and support is shared. The **Student Adjustment Counselor** and the **Director of Student Services for the North Berkshire School Union** assist in forwarding records through approved, secure channels.

This process ensures compliance with all federal and state privacy regulations while supporting a smooth, well-informed transition for each student entering a high school or CTE program.

Section 6: Maintenance of Records

Documentation and Accountability

Gabriel Abbott Memorial School will maintain records to ensure consistent implementation and accountability of its **Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy**.

To track participation and monitor compliance with this policy:

- **MyCAP Activities**: Teachers will maintain logs documenting student participation in MyCAP lessons and advisory sessions throughout the school year. These logs will include activity dates, participation notes, and completion of required MyCAP components.
- **Tours and Outreach Efforts**: The district will maintain administrative records for all student tours and career exploration activities, including attendance, transportation schedules, and correspondence with hosting schools. Records will also reflect student participation in additional outreach opportunities, such as the McCann Technical School after-school exploratory program.

All records related to MyCAP participation, CTE tours, and other career exploration experiences will be retained in accordance with district policy and state recordkeeping requirements. Documentation will be reviewed annually to support the district's attestation to the **Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)** that this policy has been implemented with fidelity.

Appendix: MyCAP Scope and Sequence by Grade Level

Grade Level	MyCAP Focus	Core Activities and Outcomes
Grade 6	Self-Awareness and Goal Setting	Students identify personal strengths, interests, and values through reflection activities and digital assessments. They begin to set short- and long-term academic goals, understand the connection between effort and achievement, and are introduced to the concept of career pathways.
Grade 7	Career Exploration and Skill Development	Students explore a wide range of career clusters using online tools and classroom-based exploration activities. They connect academic subjects to real-world careers, complete career interest inventories, and participate in discussions about the skills and education required for various occupations.

Grade 8	Pathway Planning and Transition Preparation	Students engage in deeper exploration of specific career and technical pathways, including preparation for high school choices. They participate in tours of McCann Technical School and Drury High School, reflect on their experiences, and complete MyCAP activities that align personal interests with high school and postsecondary planning.