INSTRUCTION

Specialty Programs

This regulation includes two types of site-specific programs: Specialty and Career and Technical Education (CTE).

I. Application Process

A. Application

The application for specialty programs in Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) shall include the following components:

1. Permission from the parent or guardian authorizing the collection of information for the application;

2. Basic student information (e.g., contact information, student grades, academic transcript);

3. A description of program requirements signed both by the student and by the parent or guardian;

4. A statement of interest in the program prepared by the student (required for all programs except elementary foreign language and International Baccalaureate Programmes);

5. An audition report (required for the Fine Arts Program); and

6. A completed transfer request (required if the student does not live within the school attendance zone).

B. Application Timelines

1. All application materials for students who were living in Prince William County prior to January 1 in the year of application must be submitted on or before February 1. These students shall be notified of their status on or before March 1.
2. Applications for students who enter Prince William County after January 1 are due within 60 days from the date of school registration. These students shall be notified of their status within 30 days after the receipt of the completed application. Students shall be accepted based on available space. If there is no additional space in the program, qualified applicants shall be added to a wait list.

C. Criteria Review

1. All applications shall be reviewed to ensure that the applications are complete.

2. All applications shall be reviewed to ensure that students meet the requirements, including grade level and prerequisite courses, established for the program. Parents shall be notified if an application is incomplete.

3. All applications shall be reviewed to ensure that student interest is demonstrated. Parents shall be notified if students do not meet established requirements.

4. All applications shall be reviewed to determine rank order of student choices.

D. Program Placement

1. All efforts shall be made to place students in their first choice program.

2. If a student is selected to participate in his or her first choice program, there shall be no additional review of the application. Second choice programs shall only review the application if the student does not meet the requirements for the first choice program, or if the student is not placed in that program through a lottery. Third choice programs shall only review the application if the student does not meet the requirements for the first and second choice programs, or if the student is not placed in either program through a lottery.

E. Notification Procedures

1. Students accepted into a program shall receive a letter from that program.
2. Students not accepted into a program through a lottery shall be notified if they have been placed on a wait list or applicant pool.

3. The student’s response to the letter of acceptance from a program must be received no later than March 30. Placement in a program shall not be held after March 30.

F. Appeals Procedures

1. If a student is not accepted into his/her first program of choice, a written appeal may be sent directly to the school principal.

2. After receiving a letter of acceptance from a second or third choice program, the student has eight days to initiate an appeal to the principal of the first choice school.

3. The school principal has five days after the receipt of an appeal to accept or reject the appeal. This appeal is considered an academic appeal and follows the procedures for academic appeals established in Policy 731.

G. Transfer Procedures

1. Applicants outside of the attendance zone of the school housing the specialty program shall follow the transfer procedures delineated in Regulation 721-1 or 721-2.

2. If the number of program applicants who are transfer students means the site shall exceed its program or building capacity, a lottery among qualified transfer applicants shall be held within three weeks following the February 1 application due date.

3. Students who are not selected through the lottery shall be placed on a wait list or in an applicant pool and admitted to the program as space becomes available prior to May 15. Students placed on a wait list or in an applicant pool shall receive a letter notifying them of their application status.

4. Students who move into the School Division following January 1 and who do not apply for a program before February 1 have 30 days from registering with PWCS to submit a specialty program application and shall be admitted to programs depending on available space until September 30.
II. Curriculum Framework and the Delivery of Instruction

A. Programs of studies established for specialty programs shall address both the Virginia Standards of Learning and the PWCS curriculum documents.

B. Copies of programs of studies established for specialty programs shall be available for review and published in the annual PWCS High School Course Catalog. These programs of study shall identify essential courses that make up the program and/or identify a student as satisfactorily participating in the program.

C. Specific program requirements shall be available for review. Students and parents or guardians must sign to indicate that they have reviewed and understand the program requirements.

D. Students are expected to continue to meet specific specialty program requirements.
   1. Students who do not meet minimum specialty program requirements shall be notified of their failure to meet these requirements at each semester.
   2. Students not meeting minimum program requirements shall not be scheduled for the specialty program the following year.
   3. Transfer students not meeting minimum specialty program requirements may be returned to their base schools for the next academic year.

E. Students must be enrolled each year in at least one course in the specialty program course sequence to be considered enrolled in a specialty program.

III. Staff Selection and Staff Development

A. Positions for specialty programs may be filled from within a school site or may be advertised through the regular processes of PWCS.

B. A specific staff development plan shall be developed for each specialty program. Copies of this plan shall be available for review by the Associate Superintendent for Student Learning and Accountability and the appropriate level associate superintendent.
IV. Community Involvement

A. Each specialty program shall have an advisory committee composed of parents, staff members, and community members. This advisory committee may be a separate entity or it may be a sub-committee of the school advisory committee.

B. As business partnerships are established with each school in PWCS through Supporting Partnerships and Resources for Kids (SPARK), each specialty program shall have a component of that business partnership focused on the needs of that particular specialty program.

V. Communication and Publicity

A. Information

1. Information brochures describing specialty programs and the specific eligibility requirements for each program shall be prepared by the School Division each year. These publications shall be available to all citizens upon request.

2. Publications shall be made available to all fifth and eighth grade students by October 15 and all kindergarten and third grade students by November 30 of each year.

B. Information Timelines

1. Informational meetings to describe specialty programs shall be held between October 1 and February 1. Specific places and dates shall be established for meetings at the high school, middle school, and elementary school level to describe all of the available specialty programs. School sites shall offer at least two information meetings and may then establish additional informational meetings.

2. For students who enter the School Division after January 1, information shall be available at each specialty program site.

VI. Facilities Modification and Support Services

A. The Office of Student Learning shall cooperate with the Office of Facilities Services in the development of facilities modification.
B. Specific transportation needs shall be communicated to the Office of Transportation Services by each specialty program by April 15 of each year. The report shall include the specific names and addresses of students who shall require transportation to the specialty program.

VII. Evaluation Design

A. Each specialty program shall have an evaluation plan in place and undergo a self-evaluation each year prior to June 30. This specific plan shall be developed with the advice and assistance of the Office of Accountability.

B. Evaluation shall be an ongoing process with results published by August 30 of each year.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

I. Application Process

A. Application

The application for site-limited CTE programs in PWCS shall include the following components:

1. Permission from the parent or guardian authorizing the collection of information for the application;

2. Basic student information (e.g., mailing address, contact information, academic record);

3. A description of program requirements signed both by the student and by the parent or guardian;

4. A statement of interest in the program prepared by the student; and

5. A completed transfer request (required if the student does not live within the school attendance zone).
B. Application Timelines

1. All application materials for students who were living in Prince William County prior to January 1 in the year of application must be submitted on or before February 1. These students shall be notified of their status on or before March 1.

2. Applications for students who enter Prince William County after January 1 are due within 30 days from the date of school registration. These students shall be notified of their status within 30 days after the receipt of the completed application. Students shall be accepted based on available space. If there is no additional space in the program, qualified applicants shall be added to a wait list.

C. Criteria Review

1. All applications shall be reviewed to ensure that the applications are complete.

2. All applications shall be reviewed to ensure that students meet the requirements, including grade level and prerequisite courses, established for the program.

3. All applications shall be reviewed to ensure that student interest is demonstrated.

4. All applications shall be reviewed to determine rank order of student choices.

D. Program Placement

1. All efforts shall be made to place students in their first choice program.

2. If a student is selected to participate in his or her first choice program, there shall be no additional review of the application. Second choice programs shall only review the application if the student does not meet the requirements for the first choice program, or if the student is not placed in that program through a lottery. Third choice programs shall only review the application if the student does not meet the requirements for the first and second choice programs, or if the student is not placed in either program through a lottery.
E. Notification Procedures

1. Students accepted into a program shall receive a letter from that program.

2. Students not accepted into a program through a lottery shall be notified if they have been placed on a wait list or applicant pool.

3. The student response to the letter of acceptance from a program must be received no later than March 30. Places in a program shall not be held after March 30.

F. Appeals Procedures

1. If a student is not accepted into his/her first program of choice, a written appeal may be sent directly to the school principal.

2. After receiving a letter of acceptance from a second or third choice program, the student has eight days to initiate an appeal to the principal of the first choice school.

3. The school principal has five days after the receipt of an appeal to accept or reject the appeal. This appeal is considered an academic appeal and follows the procedures for academic appeals established in Policy 731.

G. Transfer Procedures

1. Applicants outside of the feeder pattern of the school housing the site limited CTE program shall follow the transfer procedures delineated in Regulation 721-2.

2. If the number of qualified program applicants exceeds program or building capacity, students who are not accepted shall be placed on a wait list and admitted to the program as space becomes available prior to May 15.

3. Students who move into the School Division following January 1 and who do not apply for a program before February 1 shall be admitted to programs based on available space until the first day of school.
II. Curriculum Framework and the Delivery of Instruction

A. Programs of studies established for site-limited CTE programs shall address industry standards, reinforce Standards of Learning, and follow PWCS curriculum documents and state curriculum guides for such programs.

B. Copies of programs of studies established for site-limited CTE programs shall be available for review.

III. Staff Selection and Staff Development

A. Positions for site–limited CTE programs may be filled from within a school site or may be advertised through the regular processes of PWCS. All instructors shall be state endorsed in the area of instruction and meet any additional licensure or certification requirements established by the state and/or the program curriculum.

B. A staff development plan shall be developed for each program. Copies of this plan shall be available for review by the Associate Superintendent for Student Learning and Accountability and the appropriate level associate superintendent.

IV. Community Involvement

A. The CTE program has a Division-level advisory council composed of parents, staff members, and related business members.

B. As business partnerships are established with each school in Prince William County through SPARK, each program shall have a component of that business partnership focused on the needs of that particular program.

V. Communication and Publicity

A. Information

1. Each year, the School Division shall prepare an information brochure describing each site limited CTE program and the specific eligibility requirements for each program. This publication shall be available to all citizens upon request.
2. This publication shall be made available to all eighth grade students by October 15 of each year.

B. Information Timelines

1. Informational meetings to describe programs shall be held between October 1 and February 1. Specific places and dates shall be established for meetings to describe all available programs. Programs shall offer at least two information meetings and may then establish additional informational meetings.

2. For students who enter the School Division after February 1, information shall be available at each program site.

VI. Facilities Modification and Support Services

A. It shall be the responsibility of the base school to maintain the facilities that house a site-limited CTE program in accordance with Regulation 890-1.

B. Support Services

1. Specific transportation needs for career and technical education transfer programs shall be communicated to the Office of Transportation Services by April 15 of each year. The report shall include the specific names and addresses of students who shall require transportation to the program.

2. Bus transportation for students who participate in CTE transport programs shall be arranged by the building principal (or designee), since these students shall be transported to and from the base high school building for participation in the program.

VII. Evaluation Design

A. All CTE program completers shall be invited to participate in a student follow-up the spring following high school graduation. Additional information shall be collected at each program site and shared with their advisory committee for the improvement of the program.

B. Evaluation shall be an ongoing process with results published by August 30 of each year.
Principals, Level Associate Superintendents, and the Associate Superintendent for Student Learning and Accountability are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this regulation.

The Associate Superintendent for Student Learning and Accountability (or designee) is responsible for reviewing this regulation in 2020.