STEPS FOR APPLYING TO THE GATEWAY TO COLLEGE PROGRAM

Eligibility Requirements for the Gateway to College Program

- The student did not earn a high school diploma
- The student must be between the ages of 16 - 20
- The student must reside in a Massachusetts school district
- The student is behind on credits for age and grade

**Step 1: Complete the application packet**

- Complete the application packet in full, and sign the application.
- Complete the three essay questions.
- Obtain an official high school transcript from all high schools attended.
- Obtain a copy of Grade 9 Biology and Grade 10 Math and ELA MCAS scores, if applicable.
- Obtain a letter of recommendation from the guidance counselor, if the student is currently enrolled in high school (or was enrolled within the last six months).

Application packets may be obtained by calling Gateway to College at 978-630-9248 or through the Access and Transition Division website at [http://www.mwcc.edu/services/CAPP/sub/gateway.html](http://www.mwcc.edu/services/CAPP/sub/gateway.html).

**Step 2: Attend a Three-Day Information Session**

Applicants may sign up in advance and reserve a slot in an Information Session by calling Gateway to College at 978-630-9248 or 978-630-9249.

Applicants are expected to bring their completed application materials to the Information Session. Application materials include: the completed application (signed); three required essays; official (sealed) copies of high school transcripts; high school MCAS scores; guidance counselor letter of recommendation; consent form, MWCC application form, parent/guardian form, and school district information form.

At the Information Session, applicants will:

- Receive detailed information, including expectations and benefits of the Gateway to College program.
- Take a reading comprehension test.
- Receive the opportunity to obtain answers to questions/concerns about the program.
- Receive a review of their application materials to make certain that they meet all basic eligibility requirements.
- Receive the opportunity to meet with Gateway to College students and staff members, and to share their reasons for being interested in this unique scholarship opportunity.
During the first day of the Information Session, students who meet basic eligibility requirements and who demonstrate an 8th grade reading level or higher will be referred to the second day of the information session. During the second day, students will take the college placement test (Accuplacer) in order to determine academic placement. During the third day, students will be given the opportunity to show that they have the reading and writing skills necessary to achieve success in an academic environment, and they will have the opportunity to visit a Gateway career class. The three-day information session requires 100% attendance during all three days, as well as completion of in-class and homework assignments. Students must arrive on time each day.

**Step 3: Participate in a Personal Interview**

Students who complete the Information Session will be scheduled for a personal interview. Interviews will take place one-on-one with an MWCC Gateway to College staff member. Staff members will use the interview as an opportunity to get to know a student better, to learn about his/her strengths, weaknesses, and concerns. All Information Sessions and Personal Interviews will take place on the Gardner Campus of Mount Wachusett Community College. Students are required to make their own arrangements for transportation to and from the college.

**Step 4: Selection Committee Review**

The Selection Committee will review all applications for the Gateway to College program. It is very important that students submit all required application materials by the deadline date. Acceptance to the program is not guaranteed, and program space is limited to 40 students for September and 40 students for January.

The Selection Committee will take into consideration the applicant’s motivation for the program, the completeness of the application packet, and information session attendance, which is why it is important to put your best foot forward.

All applicants will be notified by phone and letter of the Selection Committee’s decision. Students who are accepted to the Gateway to College Program will receive a letter of acceptance, Resource Specialist contact information, and various other forms necessary for registration. Students will be asked to call their Resource Specialist to confirm or decline their acceptance. Students who are accepted and who are currently enrolled in a high school or an alternative education program will need to notify their school or program that they will be transferring to the Ralph C. Mahar Regional High School for the Gateway to College program. Applicants who do not receive a notification letter should call the Division of Access and Transition at 978-630-9248 to check their status. Students who change residences after applying to the Gateway Program are responsible for providing Gateway staff with their new address.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU!**