

PREPARING FOR A SUCCESSFUL EARLY COLLEGE PROGRAM ON YOUR HS CAMPUS

Things that can facilitate successful implementation of an Early College MOA Program

∞ **Start Early.**

Successful Early College partnerships require a great deal of planning and the participation of many. You need to start at least a year ahead; but, the more lead time you give yourself, the better.

∞ **Have an Overall, Principal-Driven Vision of what you would like your Early College Program to Accomplish**

Implementing an Early College Program requires a great deal of time, effort and resources for both the high school and the college partner. Because of this, make sure your school will see a return-on-investment by anchoring it in an overall vision and plan, which is both supported and promoted by your principal, to increase college-going rates at your school. This means having a plan to target students who wouldn't normally go to college. Targeting students who are already college-bound and/or failing to define a specific target population will not change your school's college-going rates.

∞ **Identify a Target Population for your Early College Program. Keep them in mind as you build out your Program.**

Targeting your "top" students doesn't benefit anyone. Your school's college-going rate won't increase; and these students, who are likely mainland and/or ivy league school bound, are least likely to be able to benefit from the credits awarded through Early College (i.e., those schools are more likely to not accept the credit). Middle of the Road students benefit the most. They will gain a stronger desire to go to college; will gain the attitudes, behaviors and habits needed for college and career success; benefit from being exposed to the increased rigor; and are more likely to attend colleges that will accept the credits earned through Early College.

However, you need to actually have a plan and a strategy that will allow these students to benefit from the program. That may include a plan to cultivate the desire to participate in these students, and to help them develop the academic skills needed to qualify for classes.

∞ **Designate 1 Overall Coordinator for your Early College Program who is not an Administrator.**

Executing a successful Early College Program requires a team. However, every team needs a leader. A successful coordinator has:

- The **time** and **ability** to focus on the Early College work
- An understanding and belief in the mission of Early College
- An understanding of how to help the program fit into the HS campus
- The organizational capacity to juggle multiple deadlines and the multiple facets of an Early College Program
- The ability to work collaboratively with all high school stakeholders, your college partner, students, parents and funders.



☞ **Develop an Early College Team on your Campus.**

Early College is not a one-man show. Even the best Early College Coordinators cannot successfully execute a program on their own. Each high school campus needs to have a team that understands and supports Early College, and that is committed to paving the way for the program. So, the members of the team need to be people who can make decisions, and who can help overcome any obstacles encountered. Early College Teams should include:

- The Early College Coordinator
- An Administrator (Principal, Vice Principal, etc.)
- Counseling Department Chair
- Leadership from IT
- The SASA/Front Office
- Leadership from Facilities/Custodial & Room Cleaning
- The Registrar
- The Account Clerk

Teams do not need to meet regularly. Team members just need to work together when necessary.

☞ **Make sure there is sufficient Principal Support.**

Successful Early College Programs have principals who are highly active in providing direction and leadership for the program. They have a vision for the program and how it will impact students; are significantly involved in the decision-making about the program and its structure; allocate resources; provide advocacy; and constantly work to reinforce the vision of Early College and align it with the high school at-large.

☞ **Procedures are your Friend!**

Early College programming involves a great many logistics and hard-and-fast deadlines. To make sure all bases are covered at all times, think through and come up with standardized procedures on how your school will tackle the many different processes it will have to undertake...and create handouts! Procedures and plans will be needed for:

- Recruiting students
- Collecting and Submitting all Application Materials
- Placement Testing
- Communicating with...Everyone!
- Course Registration
- Room, Facility and Campus Access
- Attendance Collection
- Requesting Health Records from the School Health Center
- Billing and Payment
- Applying Earned Credits
- Supporting students!

☞ **Parent & Student Orientations: Educate Students and their Parents about what's going to be required of them as Dually-Enrolled Students**

Early College students are unique in their need to juggle the demands of both high school and college simultaneously. Screen your students for their competing commitments and make sure they fully understand what is going to be required of them before allowing them to commit to taking Early College classes. Students who participate in Early College classes need to have the ability to succeed in them.