Prior to Applying for Designation

Identify Partner Groups ***ECHS Benchmark 2, 3 & 6**	☐ 1)	Why is each partner interested?
	☐ 2)	Does the partnering institution of higher education (IHE) have a history of previous success with K-12 school districts? a) Are there current programs in place besides ECHS? If so, how institutionalized or permanent are these programs?
	☐ 3)	How invested is each partner?
Conduct Needs Assessment	☐ 1)	Has a need been established through analysis of data? Is there support from all stakeholders?
	☐ 2)	What is the mission of the partnership and, eventually, the program based on the established need?
	☐ 3)	Are there alternative ways to meet this need?
	☐ 4)	Are services being duplicated?
Advocacy on Behalf of the Program ***ECHS Benchmark 2, 3, 4 & 6**	☐ 1)	Who supports the program?
	☐ 2)	Are leaders inside and outside the partnership willing and able to publicly support the program?
Benefits to Partners	☐ 1)	What does each partner gain from participating?
	☐ 2)	Does the IHE have a distinctive educational philosophy or pedagogical approach? a) If so, how well does that match up with the ECHS campus's educational approach? b) How did it influence the campus' ECHS design?
***ECHS Benchmark 2**	☐ 3)	Does the IHE have a significant enrollment of minority and urban students? a) Do they have a significant enrollment of students who enter the IHE with academic deficiencies? b) Do they have a strong track record of success with students from these backgrounds? c) How are they incorporating the supports and approaches they have developed to better support students from underrepresented groups into the ECHS design?
	☐ 4)	How does the model provide sufficient benefits to the IHE to sustain the IHE's involvement in the long run? a) How well does this partnership fit into the IHE's broader strategic plan for growth and success?
	☐ 5)	Can each partner articulate the benefits?
Understand Policy, Legislation, and the ECHS Model ***ECHS Benchmark 2**	☐ 1)	What is the culture surrounding dual enrollment in the district or charter and the IHE?
	☐ 2)	How do students currently access dual enrollment, and how will the ECHS impact that?
	☐ 3)	Are Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and articulation agreements in place between all partners?
	☐ 4)	What research and resources are available to explain the ECHS model? Have the potential partners conducted a site visit to an ECHS?

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Funding and Sustainability ***ECHS Benchmark 2**	☐	1) Is start-up funding available?
	☐	2) How are dual enrollment courses funded?
	☐	3) How can the partners share program costs?
	☐	4) Does the inclusion of two years of IHE coursework significantly increase the per-student cost compared to a traditional high school design? 　a) If so, what features account for the higher costs, and what revenue sources have been identified to fill the gap?
	☐	5) What concrete outcomes will the IHE need to see over the next five years to feel that the partnership is yielding sufficient returns to justify continued investment?

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12 Months Before Opening

Identify and Select Principal or Director ***ECHS Benchmark 6**	☐ 1)	Does the leader have campus start-up or redesign experience?
	☐ 2)	Does the leader share the educational philosophy of the ECHS initiative?
	☐ 3)	Does the leader have strong communication skills?
	☐ 4)	Does the leader have a hands-on management style?
	☐ 5)	Is the leader able to foster collaboration?
Identify a Planning Team ***ECHS Benchmark 3**	☐ 1)	Are all major stakeholder groups represented? (i.e., parents, principal, superintendent, provost, IHE liaison, business partners etc.).
	☐ 2)	Who will lead the team?
	☐ 3)	Is a planning process, including a timeline with stated outcomes, put in place?
	☐ 4)	Are the roles and expectations of stakeholder groups clearly defined?
Develop a Public Relations Plan for the Planning Process	☐ 1)	Does the plan target key individuals who need to be informed and groomed to support the program?
	☐ 2)	Is there a communication plan in place to keep stakeholders informed of the program development efforts?
	☐ 3)	Does the plan include multiple approaches for communication and dissemination of information, such as news articles, brochures, public forums, web sites, and individual meetings?
	☐ 4)	Does the plan include structures for ongoing information- sharing and consultation with key stakeholders after the program begins?
Develop an ECHS Mission Statement	☐ 1)	Does the mission define the campus' purpose and objectives?
	☐ 2)	Is the mission statement actionable? Does it state the goals of the ECHS and what the campus will do to achieve these goals?
	☐ 3)	Does the statement provide a descriptive profile of the students to be served?
	☐ 4)	Does the mission encompass the ECHS Core Principles?
Identify Target Student Body ***ECHS Benchmark 1**	☐ 1)	What are the characteristics of the target student population, including academic strengths, weaknesses, and motivational, social-emotional needs, and motivation for post-secondary education?
	☐ 2)	Does the ECHS serve, or include plans to scale-up to serve, students in grades 9 through 12, target, and enroll students who are at risk of dropping out of school as defined by the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and who might not otherwise go to college?
	☐ 3)	Is there a plan in place to ensure that the ECHS Blueprint is implemented with fidelity?
	☐ 4)	What is the campus's admissions process and criteria? a) What are the academic, ethnic, and linguistic background characteristics of students attending the campus (i.e. percentage
	☐ 5)	Based on the identified characteristics, what are the defined needs of the students and teachers?

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Planning the Program of Study *ECHS Benchmark 4		
	☐ 1)	What courses are necessary for students to meet high school graduation requirements?
	☐ 2)	What high school courses will be offered? Are they dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, and/or International Baccalaureate
	☐ 3)	How many and which courses will offer IHE credit? a) Which programs of study will be offered?
	☐ 4)	Is the basic four-year course sequence defined in order to provide enough credits to earn a high school diploma and a minimum of 60 IHE credit hours?
	☐ 5)	What IHE courses will be available to ECHS students? a) Will ECHS students be integrated into IHE courses with IHE students?
	☐ 6)	Does the distribution of courses provide a post-secondary pathway? a) Does it meet requirements for general or technical majors?
	☐ 7)	What are the prerequisites for upper-level courses of study?
	☐ 8)	How will technology be incorporated into the campus?
	☐ 9)	How will the schedule be designed in order to meet the needs of the program of study?
	☐ 10)	What is the planned sequence of IHE-level courses? How will students achieve 60 credits?
	☐ 11)	Will any of the IHE courses be specially designed or adapted for the ECHS program? a) If yes, explain. (What is the approval process at the sponsoring IHE?)
	☐ 12)	What is the rationale for the sequence of IHE courses selected and the level and type of substitution of IHE-level classes for HS classes?
	☐ 13)	Will all students take the same IHE-level program of study, or will the sequence be differentiated based on student's level of academic readiness?
	☐ 14)	What is the rationale for these choices?
	☐ 15)	What do students' schedules look like at the high school and IHE?
	☐ 16)	What pre-existing IHE courses were chosen, changed, or adapted as part of the curriculum? a) What new courses were created?
	☐ 17)	How does the selected course of study ensure that students are able to meet required state performance standards (e.g., high school graduation test requirements, state university entrance requirements)?
	☐ 18)	Does the selected course of study give ECHS students an advantage over students enrolled in IHE preparatory high school program in gaining admission to a public university upon graduation?
	☐ 19)	What credit do students receive for their IHE courses? (High school, IHE, or dual?) If IHE credit, what type? a) Are these credits transferable to other IHEs?
	☐ 20)	How does the class size of student's IHE courses compare to the class size of their non-IHE classes?
	☐ 21)	Does the IHE have or will it consider policies that support early IHE (e.g., streamlining course approval process, awarding adjunct faculty status)?

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Procedures for a Blended Curriculum ***ECHS Benchmark 4 & 6**	☐	1) How will the partners collaborate to ensure that dual credit courses meet high school graduation requirements?
	☐	2) Who will be involved in the planning process? How will course offerings be negotiated with the IHE partner?
	☐	3) What is the course approval process?
	☐	4) How will high school and IHE teachers participate in creating the program of study?
	☐	5) Who will teach the IHE courses - full-time high school faculty who gain adjunct status, tenure or tenure track IHE faculty, adjunct IHE faculty?
	☐	6) Who is responsible for evaluating the quality of instruction in the IHE-level courses? To whom are the teachers of the IHE courses accountable for student performance in the course?
	☐	7) If IHE faculty will be teaching some or all of the ECHS IHE-level courses, what relationship will these IHE faculty have to ECHS school community? a) Will they be active participants in the ECHS community (e.g., participate in faculty meetings or other types of campus team meetings)? b) Will the ECHS campus leader have any direct supervisory authority over IHE faculty teaching their students?
	☐	8) To what extent are IHE courses substituting for high school courses to meet core academic requirements for high school graduation? a) Which IHE courses are substituting for high school offerings (e.g., English 1301 or 1302 replace 11th grade English)?
	☐	9) What is the rationale for this instructional design (i.e., cost, quality, logistics, etc.)?
	☐	10) What process is in place to review and revise course offerings and sequence in light of experience?
Identify Academic Support Structures ***ECHS Benchmark 4 & 5**	☐	1) What academic support services will be needed to help students be successful in both their high school and IHE courses?
	☐	2) How will the ECHS succeed in teaching students who enter at varying levels of academic competency the foundation skills they will need in order to succeed in IHE-level courses?
	☐	3) What academic support services will be needed to ensure that students meet their high school graduation requirements while working toward earning 60 IHE credits? Are plans in place for remediation?
	☐	4) What key features has the campus incorporated into its design to ensure that all its students are able to meet the academic requirements for IHE work (e.g., incorporated middle grades, added 13th year)?
	☐	5) Does the design have a differentiated IHE preparatory program for students based on their academic skills at program entry, or is there a common academic prep program?
	☐	6) How is the campus ensuring that its IHE-preparatory program is preparing its students for the standards and demands of IHE courses? a) Is the IHE faculty or other members of the IHE involved in reviewing course content? b) Are there other mechanisms?
	☐	7) How does the campus determine when students are ready for IHE courses? a) What criteria/data is used?

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Identify Academic Support Structures ***ECHS Benchmark 3, 4 & 6**	☐ 1)	Does the design include a plan so that students take IHE coursework as a group first and then individually at the IHE? a) Do students receive structuring advising and support as a cohort then more individual advising?
	☐ 1)	How will the campus/IHE support students who are taking IHE courses?
	☐ 2)	Do students have the opportunity to take summer seminars or workshops prior to on-campus coursework? a) What is the campus schedule? b) Does the campus use summer time and breaks? c) If so, for what purposes?
	☐ 3)	What tutoring and academic supports are provided to students in IHE classes? Are there adult or close-age mentors for the students?
	☐ 4)	How will the supports be funded and staffed?
Identify Social Emotional Supports ***ECHS Benchmark 4 & 6**	☐ 1)	What counseling services will be needed to ensure student success?
	☐ 2)	How will the program engage the student's family to help attain the academic goals?
	☐ 3)	How will discipline issues be handled?
	☐ 4)	How will student attendance be monitored in high school classes versus IHE classes?
	☐ 5)	To what extent are the ECHS students encouraged and expected to use the same support services available to other IHE students (e.g., counseling services, writing centers and tutoring services, college clubs, sports teams, etc.)?
	☐ 6)	What are the key elements of advising and counseling components?
	☐ 7)	What are the social benefits of high school students being on an IHE campus?
Staffing the Program ***ECHS Benchmark 6**	☐ 1)	How many will campus teachers will be needed to provide the program of study?
	☐ 2)	How many IHE instructors/seats in IHE classrooms will be needed?
	☐ 3)	How will counseling and guidance services be offered?
	☐ 4)	What administrative support staff will be needed?
	☐ 5)	If high school teachers will be teaching one or more of the courses as adjunct faculty, what is the process of authorization?
	☐ 6)	Does the IHE have a history of using high school faculty to teach its dual enrollment courses or other IHE courses to high school students? a) If so, is it using the same process to authorize and supervise performance of ECHS high school faculty?
	☐ 7)	If using high school faculty to teach IHE courses to high school students in a new practice, what process is the IHE putting in place to supervise and evaluate the performance of its adjunct faculty?
	☐ 8)	If high school teachers will be teaching IHE courses, has the campus recruited high school faculty for these courses who already have qualifications and experience teaching at the IHE level? a) If not, how is the campus ensuring a match between its faculty and the requirements to teach IHE classes? b) How has the IHE partner been involved in the recruitment and selection process?
	☐ 9)	If high school faculty will be teaching, what is the professional development plan for high school faculty teaching IHE courses to ensure that they are keeping up with standards and requirements of the IHE's academic departments?

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Staffing the Program		
	☐ 1)	If IHE faculty teaching, is there a professional development plan to help them support the needs of ECHS students or other students who need help acclimating themselves to the demands of IHE course work?
*ECHS Benchmark 2 & 6	☐ 2)	If IHE faculty will be teaching, what is their faculty status (fulltime, adjunct, etc.)?
	☐ 3)	If the design calls for ECHS students to take regular IHE classes at the campus, were professors and their courses screened or evaluated in any way to determine professors who would be best suited to teaching ECHS students?

	☐ 4)	What is the connection between IHE instructors and campus staff?
		    a) Do they engage in common planning or other forms of professional development?
		    b) Do the IHE faculty identify themselves as part-time members of a campus' staff and work as a member of a staff team?

	☐ 5)	How will the staffing needs increase as the campus scales-up to full capacity?
Site Selection and Campus Organization ***ECHS Benchmark 6**	☐ 1)	Where will the ECHS be located?
	☐ 2)	Will the ECHS be located on an IHE campus?
	☐ 3)	Will the ECHS be a stand-alone campus?
	☐ 4)	Will the ECHS be a campus within a larger high school?
	☐ 5)	Will the ECHS use an existing or a new building? a) Are renovations required?
	☐ 6)	Will the ECHS be a charter school?
	☐ 7)	Will ECHS students be integrated or separated from IHE students?
	☐ 8)	Have the necessary permissions from partners and local government entities regarding space been obtained?
	☐ 9)	If the ECHS shares facilities (on an IHE or high school campus), how will issues regarding use of space be resolved?
	☐ 10)	Where will academic and social-emotional support services be located?
	☐ 11)	Will students experience ECHS as a blended high school and IHE or as being enrolled in in two separate institutions- a high school and an IHE? Or something in-between?
	☐ 12)	Will the courses be offered at the high school? at the IHE? Or at both?
	☐ 13)	What is the rationale for the institutional design choice and the relationship between the pre-IHE and IHE components?
	☐ 14)	What IHE facilities, resources, and services will be available to ECHS students?
	☐ 15)	How will students be transported to and from campus?

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Deciding on Governance Structures *ECHS Benchmark 2 &3	☐	1) Who will run the daily operations of the campus?
	☐	2) To whom will this person answer?
	☐	3) What role will teachers and administrators play?
	☐	4) What is the governance and management structure of the campus? a) What is the role of the post-secondary partner in campus governance and management?
	☐	5) Is the post-secondary partner a private or public institution or part of a public system? a) If public, what autonomy do they have as a campus to make decisions related to ECHS, and what decisions/permissions need to be granted by central authority for the IHE system?
	☐	6) Who is making the decisions related to your ECHS campus at the IHE school (i.e., what is the decision making process at the IHE for the different components of the ECHS partnership? a) What is the role of the academic affairs office versus office of president versus community affairs or outreach office?)?
	☐	7) What are the major operational issues involved in implementing the planned academic design for the IHE component? a) What is your operational plan for managing the delivery of the IHE component of the program in light of these issues?
	☐	8) Has the partnership encountered any significant barriers to implementing its planned design? a) If so, how have you addressed those barriers?
	☐	9) What is the role of members of the IHE's executive leadership in the partnership? a) Is there a faculty committee assigned to this work? Is it lead by a single department?
	☐	10) At the IHE's end, who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the partnership?
	☐	11) How is information shared across institutions?
	☐	12) If students are taking mainstream IHE courses, are they taking these courses as an ECHS cohort?
	☐	13) Does the faculty know who the ECHS students are in their class, or are they indistinguishable from students in the class?
	☐	14) How will ECHS faculty and staff communicate and collaborate with faculty and staff at the IHE?

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Planning & Developing the Budget *ECHS Benchmark 2, 3 & 6	☐ 1)	Based on the program needs, what is the cost of the program as planned?
	☐ 2)	Have all hidden costs, such as tuition, textbooks, and transportation, been taken into account?
	☐ 3)	What are the available public and private funding streams? Are they sufficient?
	☐ 4)	How will funds derived from Average Daily Attendance (ADA) at the high school and seat time at the IHE be expended?
	☐ 5)	How will the ECHS access and make the best use of start-up funds?
	☐ 6)	Will adjustments need to be made to the program based on budget issues? Are there opportunities for the partners to work together to achieve additional cost-savings?
	☐ 7)	What sources of non-financial support (partnerships, in-kind contributions, etc.) are available?
	☐ 8)	How will the partners collaborate to ensure sustainable funding levels?
	☐ 9)	How will the budget be tracked, monitored, and reported?
	☐ 10)	Are projected expenditures and revenues realistically based on increases in projected enrollment as the campus scales-up to full capacity?

	☐ 11)	What is the campus' cost-per student (excluding in-kind contributions)? What is their budgeted staff to student ratio? T
		   a) Teacher to student ratio excluding IHE faculty or IHE courses?
		   b) Teacher to student ratio factoring in students enrolled in IHE courses (e.g., convert student enrollments in regular IHE courses to faculty FTE equivalents)?
		   c) What is the cost per-student including in-kind contributions?
		   d) What are the revenue sources covering these costs (amounts and percentage of total cost covered by each revenue source)?

	☐ 12)	Does the provision of two years of IHE coursework add, lower, or not affect the campus's cost per student (i.e., what would happen to the cost per student if the campus converted to a traditional high school design?)?
	☐ 13)	What are the campus' costs per-student associated with offering the IHE course of study? a) Detail the budget costs by grade level including percentage of FTE of regular teaching staff, counselor or advisor ratio to students in IHE courses, payments to IHE for adjunct faculty, tuition and fees paid to IHE, cost of books, and transportation for instructional hours per student.

	☐ 14)	What are the total cost per student for students enrolled in IHE courses, and what non-school revenue sources (including IHE in-kind contributions) are covering those costs?
		   a) Detail these government or IHE contributions.
		   b) Is the IHE receiving any state and philanthropic funding to cover its in-kind or waived costs?

	☐ 15)	What are the IHE's regular costs per student FTE?
		   a) What percentage of those costs is covered by public funding?
		   b) What percentage is covered by tuition and fees?

	☐ 16)	Converting the costs described above, how does the cost per student FTE for IHE coursework compare to the costs per student FTE in high school courses?

	☐ 17)	Calculate student FTE costs by grade if possible. On average, what percentage of student class time will be spent in IHE course work at each grade level (i.e., what percent of student FTE will be spend in IHE course work)?
		   a) What are the total direct costs of instruction and support services for each grade level?
		   b) What percentage of those direct instructional and support costs are allocated to covering the IHE courses and related support?

	☐ 18)	What are the IHE's and campus's costs associated with planning the partnership? a) On-going management of the partnership? How are these costs paid?

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Planning & Developing the Budget *ECHS Benchmark 2 & 3	☐	1)	Does the financial sustainability of the design require changes in federal, state, and or local policy? a) Describe the changes required and the strategy to secure those changes?
	☐	2)	Does the financial sustainability of the design require changes in IHE policies? a) Describe the changes.
	☐	3)	Given the costs and revenues associated with the IHE's participation in ECHS, what is their long-run institutional and financial interest in sustaining the ECHS partnership? Does the IHE have an interest in expanding its delivery of services to ECHS students to additional campuses?
	☐	4)	Does the Memorandum of Understanding reflect agreements between the partners with regard to funding?

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9 Months Before Opening

Community Engagement ***ECHS Benchmark 4**	☐ 1)	How can the public relations plan for the planning process be used for community engagement?
	☐ 2)	What questions, concerns, or aspirations does the community have regarding the ECHS initiative?
	☐ 3)	Which community leaders and constituencies have a voice?
	☐ 4)	What types of outreach are most appropriate for the various constituencies, including students, families, higher education leaders, youth organizations, policy makers, business and nonprofit partners?
	☐ 5)	How will the ECHS build a case of support with government and civic leaders?
	☐ 6)	What approaches for communication and dissemination of information will be used? Examples include news articles, brochures, public forums, web sites, and individual meetings.
State/District Negotiations ***ECHS Benchmark 3**	☐ 1)	Have issues surrounding campus authority, autonomy in decision making, state/district resources, and compliance procedures been addressed?
	☐ 2)	What permission does the ECHS need from the district, charter, or IHE?
	☐ 3)	What permission does the ECHS need from local government entities?
Memoranda of Understanding and Agreements ***ECHS Benchmark 4**	☐ 1)	Does the MOU articulate the mission of the campus?
	☐ 2)	Does the MOU delineate roles and responsibilities regarding the program of study, including design and delivery of the instructional program, assessment, and crediting of courses?
	☐ 3)	Does the MOU define financial arrangements regarding responsibility for expenses including tuition and fees, textbooks, transportation?
	☐ 4)	Does the MOU define financial arrangements regarding income?
	☐ 5)	Does the MOU define agreements regarding site selection?
	☐ 6)	Does the MOU define joint decision making processes?

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6 Months Before Opening

Category			Item
Student Assessment ***ECHS Benchmark 5**	☐	1)	Will an IHE entrance exam such as Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) be used? What are the exemptions?
	☐	2)	Are there multiple performance measures such as standardized tests, performance assessments, portfolios, and real-world experience through which students may demonstrate academic progress?
	☐	3)	Is there a focus on creating a culture of continual assessment of individual student progress toward performance expectations?
	☐	4)	What standards must students meet to demonstrate that they are prepared academically to take IHE classes (e.g., placement tests, GPA, satisfactory completion of pre-requisite IHE prep courses?)?
	☐	5)	How is student progress in classes monitored?
	☐	6)	Is there a timeline that defines adequate progress toward achieving standards? What is the process for students who are not making adequate progress?
Student Recruitment ***ECHS Benchmark 1**	☐	1)	Are there structures in place for identifying the target population of students who would benefit from the ECHS?
	☐	2)	Are there structures in place for providing students with some exposure to or experience with the program before they decide to enroll?
Personnel Selection ***ECHS Benchmark 6**	☐	1)	Does the applicant pool include teachers and administrators who have school start-up or redesign experience?
	☐	2)	Does the applicant pool include teachers and administrators who share the educational philosophy of the ECHS initiative?
	☐	3)	Does the applicant pool include teachers and administrators who enjoy working in a small campus environment?
	☐	4)	Does the applicant pool include teachers and administrators who are adaptable and enjoy learning and using new methods of instruction?

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3 Months Before Opening

Developing an Application and Selecting Students ***ECHS Benchmark 1**	☐ 1)	Does the application provide the selection committee enough information to decide if the program is appropriate for them?
	☐ 2)	Does the enrollment acceptance process ensure that decisions are not based on state assessment scores, discipline history, teacher recommendation, or minimum grade point average (GPA)?
	☐ 3)	How does the selection process ensure that the ECHS serves a population of students who are at risk of not graduating from high school?
	☐ 4)	Are there clear criteria outlined for selecting students?
	☐ 5)	Who is involved in the selection process?
	☐ 6)	What structures are in place to ensure that the recruitment, selection, and admission process meet legal requirements?
Orientation for Students/Parents ***ECHS Benchmark 1 & 4**	☐ 1)	How will the ECHS address the following issues: ECHS core principles, school mission, governance structure, instructional approach, IHE component, policies and procedures, transportation, support services?
	☐ 2)	What will the campus's handbook communicate as the important issues?
Building ECHS Culture ***ECHS Benchmark 4**	☐ 1)	How can the ECHS make use of services and resources at the IHE in order to build culture and provide unique opportunities for ECHS students?
	☐ 2)	How will the ECHS distinguish itself from other high schools?
	☐ 3)	In what ways during and beyond instruction time can the ECHS create a seamless transition between high school and IHE?
	☐ 4)	What business and community organizations might be able to participate in or benefit from partnering with the ECHS?
	☐ 5)	How might internships, externships, service learning, senior projects, and instructional time be creatively employed in order to extend learning opportunities and build ECHS culture?
	☐ 6)	Will ECHS students be physically present on the IHE campus for any of their classes? If yes, for which classes?
	☐ 7)	Will they be taking classes with other IHE students or grouped strictly with other ECHS students? a) Will this vary by grade level/year in program?
	☐ 8)	Will they experience membership in the IHE community in other important ways (i.e., use of art studios, music, physical education, clubs, mini courses or lectures, summer programs)?
	☐ 9)	Does the attitude and behavior of all campus staff model the ECHS culture?
	☐ 10)	What is the thinking behind these decisions? How central to the ECHS campus design (and the theory about why it will work) is student membership in an IHE community?

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