

ECHS Benchmark Table Talk

Benchmark 1: Target Population—The Early College High School shall serve, or include plans to scale up to serve, students in grades 9 through 12 and shall 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.

Guiding Questions:

1. How do you market your Early College Academy with parents, students, community?
2. How do you build capacity with your feeder school colleagues?
3. What type of data do you keep, for each cohort?
4. What are your challenges?
5. How can Elementary and Middle School help?

Current Practice

Challenges and/or Burning Questions:

ECHS Benchmark Table Talk

Benchmark 2: Partnership Agreement

The Early College High School shall have a current, signed Memorandum of Understanding that:

- defines the partnership between the school district(s) and the institute(s) of higher education (IHE) and addresses topics including, but not limited to, the ECHS location; the allocation of costs for tuition, fees, and textbooks; and student transportation;
- states that the school district or charter in which the student is enrolled shall pay for tuition (for all dual credit courses, including retakes), fees (including TSI administration fees), and required textbooks to the extent those charges are not waived by the partner IHE;
- defines an active partnership between the school district(s) and the IHE(s), which shall include joint decision-making procedures that allow for the planning and implementation of a coherent program across institutions; and

includes provisions and processes for collecting, sharing, and reviewing program and student data to assess the progress of the ECHS

Guiding Questions:

1. Does the ECHS Administrator have a copy of your MOU?
2. Do you review the MOU and update, yearly?
3. Does your MOU address all bullet points in the implementing column? Exemplar?
4. Does your MOU address facilities?
The 4 Ts -Technology, Textbooks,
Transportation and Tuition

Current Practice

Challenges and/or Burning Question:

ECHS Quick Write and Table Talk

Benchmark 3: P-16 Leadership Initiatives

The school district and institute of higher education (IHE) partners shall develop and maintain a leadership team that meets regularly to address issues of design and sustainability. Membership should include the Early College High School principal/director and individuals with decision-making authority from the district(s) and IHE(s).

Guiding Questions:

1. Who are the members of your leadership team?
2. How often to you meet?
3. What are the agenda topics? How could the leadership team be used your benefits?
4. What documentation do you keep of these meetings?
How do you share the agenda/minutes with key stakeholders?
5. Has the leadership team established a 5 year budget to include the 4 T's (technology, textbooks, transportation and tuition)?
6. What are your challenges?

Current Practice

Challenges and/or Burning Question:

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Benchmark 4: Curriculum and Support

The Early College High School (ECHS) shall provide a rigorous course of study that enables a participating student to receive a high school diploma and complete the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) core curriculum (as defined by the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §4.28) or an associate's degree or at least 60 credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree during grades 9-12. The ECHS shall provide students with academic, social, and emotional support in their course of study.

Guiding Questions:

1. What systems do you have in place to offer on-going academic support?
2. What systems are in place to monitor student progress with structured data review designed to identify student strengths and weaknesses? *Metrics of Outcomes-Access, Achievement, and Attainment*
3. Is tutoring or Saturday school offered, for identified students?
4. How have you built in advisory and/or college readiness into the school day?
5. What parent outreach and involvement opportunities do you provide?
6. What is your community service program, which promotes community involvement?
7. How do you partner with community businesses for internships?
8. How do you promote college awareness opportunities for families?
9. What are your challenges?

Current Practice

Challenges and/or Burning Question:

What course of study does your ECHS offer? Associate Degree, 60 hrs, Core Curriculum?

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Benchmark 5: Academic Rigor and Readiness

The Early College High School shall administer a Texas Success Initiative (TSI) college placement exam (as defined by TAC §4.53) to all accepted students to assess college readiness, design individual instructional plans, and enable students to begin college courses based on their performance.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is your plan to develop TSI and college ready skills?
2. When do you first administer TSI? How often do you test?
3. What happens if a student is not TSI ready?
4. What is your TSI intervention plan?
5. Describe your Summer Bridge program?
6. What are your challenges?

Current Practice

How can you provide an intensive academic preparation program that provides opportunities to strengthen academic skills for high school and college readiness, at your grade-level?

Challenges and/or Burning Question:

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Benchmark 6: School Design

The ECHS must provide a full-day program (i.e., full day as defined in PEIMS) at an autonomous high school (i.e., a high school with a principal or program coordinator assigned 100 percent to ECHS responsibilities who has scheduling, hiring, and budget authority), an IHE liaison with decision-making authority, and a highly qualified staff with support and training.

Guiding Questions:

1. What is your school design?
2. How often do your students access the IHE academic facilities?
3. Is the principal or director assigned to the ECHS full time? Hiring Authority? Budget Authority?
4. Do you have ECHS Core teachers?
5. Do you have an ECHS counselor?
6. How often do you meet with your IHE liaison?

Current Practice

Challenges and/or Burning Question: