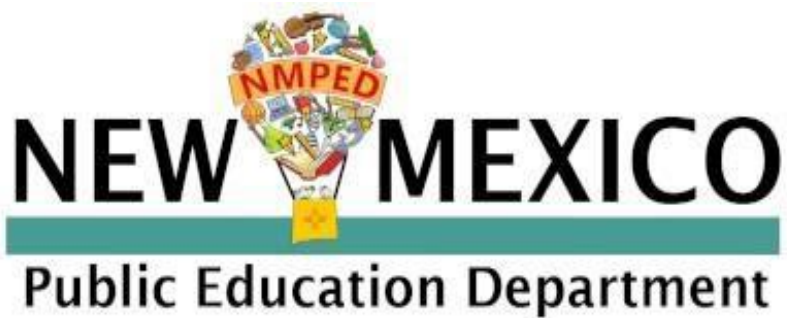


NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



Early College High Schools

Applying for ECHS Designation

Dr. Arsenio Romero
Secretary of Education

New Mexico Public Education Department
College and Career Readiness Bureau
300 Don Gaspar Ave, Room 131
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

APPLICATION MANAGERS

The agency has designated an Application Manager and College and Career Readiness Bureau Administrator who are responsible for the conduct of Early College High School Applications. Written inquiries or requests regarding this application should be addressed as follows:

Kelly Kennedy
Program Manager, Education Services
Pathway2Careers
(865) 318-6465
kelly.kennedy@p2c.org

Kevin O'Shea
Education Administrator
College and Career Readiness Bureau, PED
(505) 629-7705
kevin.oshea@ped.nm.gov

A. INTRODUCTION

Early College High Schools (ECHS) allow students to simultaneously complete requirements toward earning a regular high school diploma and to earn significant credits toward a workforce recognized credential in a college-level certificate, associate degree, or bachelor's degree at the partner institution of higher education. Early College High Schools are tuition free and serve low-income youth, first-generation college-goers, English Learners, ethnically diverse students, and other young people underrepresented in higher education. Students in an ECHS undertake rigorous academics and career technical education coursework in order to work in growing career fields with high growth, demand, skills, and wages.

Early College High Schools provide access to dual credit courses to help high school students make a seamless transition into college success. ECHS structures are innovative, interactive, research-based, and support positive outcomes for high school aged students. Integrated academic and Career Technical Education (CTE) opportunities support academic growth in meeting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The ECHS model builds on a sequence of courses within a master schedule which meets local and state graduation requirements while providing a structured CTE sequence of sufficient size, scope, and quality to fully address the Common Career Technical Core Standards for its career cluster focus.

ECHS programming and curriculum should lead to related work readiness credentials recognized by business and industry. ECHS partnerships include community members, representatives from local business and industry, and accredited, credit-granting postsecondary institutions. ECHS programs include meaningful work-based learning experiences that align to the most dynamic sectors of New Mexico's economy. ECHS students should choose electives within the school's CTE program to meet the career goals and objectives specified in their Next Step Plan.

B. PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT VISION

Bold, visionary reform that puts students first in every decision will increase student achievement and prepare our kids for success in college and career. We call on every educator, student, parent, community member, and public servant to share in the responsibility for the success of our students and, ultimately, the future of the great state of New Mexico. The New Mexico Public Education Department partners with educators, communities, and families to ensure that ALL students are healthy, secure in their identity, and holistically prepared for college, career, and life. Student engagement is an important component of keeping students from dropping out of high school, and the ECHS model promotes student engagement in an authentic and meaningful way.

The College and Career Readiness Bureau ECHS website offers a toolbox of resources, webinars, podcasts, data research, and specialized support for the local school and the State of New Mexico. The site includes contact information for existing Early College High School sites in New Mexico that serve as peer mentors.

<https://www.echs-nm.com/>

C. STEPS TO BECOMING AN OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

To become a designated Early College High School, schools must submit an online application. Once you have submitted your application, it will be reviewed by a committee appointed by the agency. Applicants may be asked to submit revisions to their proposals for the purpose of ensuring alignment with designation requirements and NM-approved design principles. The committee shall review initial applications for approval and confirm application acceptance or rejection no later than four weeks after the date of submission. At the discretion of the agency, schools not receiving initial approval may revise and resubmit application to address any department concerns. Once approved for designation, the school will be awarded a certificate of designation by the Public Education Department.

Designation resources and information can be found on the above mentioned website under the “Designation” tab in the top navigation menu. You are encouraged to use the designation resources located specifically within the resource site at <https://www.echs-nm.com/2024-designation-resources/>. There you will find the following information:

- A link to the [online application](#)
- A link to a [.docx version](#) of the application for review and working prior to submitting online
- Additional resources including templates, links to helpful website, and support session recordings and materials

D. SUMMARY OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ECHS DESIGNATION

Overview of ECHS Design – Include a description of the design structure of the ECHS. Designate if the school is a **freestanding model**, where all students at the school are enrolled in an ECHS pathway(s), or an **academy model**, where only a subset of the students at a comprehensive high school are early high school students. Describe the location in proximity to the postsecondary partner. Include hours of operation, and other relevant program details. Indicate the scheduling structure, including wrap-around services to meet the required seat time as clarified in the April 2023 guidance memo re: [HB 130](#). Describe the staffing for the ECHS, including teacher licensure and professional qualifications for staff to teach dual credit as adjunct faculty for the postsecondary partner. Additionally, please ensure your program planning is aligned with the educational requirements for NM Early College High Schools found in [Administrative Rule 6.30.13](#).

High-skilled Pathway Description – Provide a description of the proposed high-skilled pathway(s). Describe each pathway and how it supports the regional workforce need for training in high wage, high demand careers.

Crosswalks for Each Pathway Proposed - Please use the required [Crosswalk Template](#) to complete a Course Crosswalk for each pathway. Be sure to include STARS course names/numbers for CTE courses and program names/numbers for the postsecondary partner, dual credit courses. Be sure to include credits earned toward graduation and college credits earned as well as indicate any courses that are prerequisites to college coursework. (NOTE: Based on your ECHS program specifics, feel free to add rows for each semester. The items in orange font on the template are examples only and should be removed in your final copies.)

Workforce Recognized Credentials, Associate Degrees, and/or Transferable Credits Toward a Four-Year Degree to Which Pathways Align - Identify the proposed workforce recognized credential, associate degree, and/or bachelor's degrees to which transferable credits would apply for each pathway. Provide a plan of how the school will track and report student attainment of workforce recognized credentials.

Students Served - Indicate the projected number of students to be served for the first three years of implementation.

Outreach and Recruitment Process - Description of outreach and recruiting processes that incorporate efforts to reach underrepresented populations. The ECHS's goal is for the proportion of low-income students in the student body to be at least as high as that of the high school low-income population in the district. Outreach and recruitment efforts should include plans to increase the proportion of low-income students served. Describe how the school will analyze student demographic data to ensure equitable access to the ECHS and that all students are being served by the ECHS model.

Written Agreement with Postsecondary – A Memorandum of Understanding is required with at least one postsecondary partner that includes evidence of dual credit course offerings and support structures. Provide a current copy of the Memorandum of Understanding that shows evidence of dual credit course offerings for the pathway(s) offered. Indicate wrap-around service supports efforts for successful student outcomes. Provide a plan of how the school will track the number of college credit earned by ECHS students.

Identification of Workforce Partners – Identify area workforce partners and indicate to which pathways each would align.

Budget/Sustainability Plan – Provide proposed budget information for the first three years of operation. Describe the school and district/charter plans to ensure sustainability of the ECHS school model. Include funding sources. If desired, you can upload a spreadsheet or separate budget document.

Tribal Consultation Requirement - Describe the school and district/charter plan to consult with tribal leaders annually, as appropriate. This is to satisfy the goals of [Indian Education Act \(IEA\) 22-23A NMSA 1978 Article 23A](#) which includes documentation of tribal consultation to be submitted annually to the department.