

Benchmark Tool for Early College High Schools

Background

The ECHS benchmarks, developed collaboratively by the early college intermediary organizations (Antioch University Seattle, City University of New York, Communities Foundation of Texas, Foundation for California Community Colleges, Board of Regents of the University of Georgia, KnowledgeWorks Foundation, Middle College National Consortium at LaGuardia Community College, National Council of La Raza, Portland Community College, New Schools Project, SECME, Inc., Utah Partnership for Education, and Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation), establish a set of ideals to which all early college high schools strive. The document serves as a planning, improvement, and teaching tool—one that can help intermediaries, school leaders, and postsecondary partners guide an early college high school's growth.

Directions for Using the Benchmark Tools

The following tools, one for schools in a planning phase and one for schools in an implementing phase, are based on the ECHS benchmarks. Intermediaries, school leaders, postsecondary partners, and faculty can use each as a self-assessment, planning, and teaching tool.

It is most productive to have each person (intermediary, school leader, postsecondary partner, and faculty) complete the tool individually. When the group convenes, the differences in perspective provide for a rich conversation.

For each indicator, rate how visible that practice is in the school on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being “most visible.”

Then rate the importance of that practice to your school's goals from low to high.

If you feel that you don't have enough knowledge to respond to a particular indicator, skip it.

Reconvene in a group to discuss your responses and to identify next steps in the development of your early college high school.

Benchmark Tool for Early College High Schools: Beginning Phase

Students completing early college high schools graduate with a high school diploma and up to two years of college credit.

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Student attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders develop a strategy to motivate student attendance, e.g., student engagement in learning, early intervention strategies, counseling, and parent/family outreach. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Student persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders develop a strategy to encourage persistence, e.g., parent/family outreach, early intervention strategies, mentoring, tutoring, counseling, and other supports for academic and socio-emotional growth. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Graduation rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School develops well-structured plan for all students to complete high school graduation requirements in a timely manner (based on school design). 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
College credit and degrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders develop a well-structured plan for all students to complete a course of study that satisfies high school requirements and provides up to two years of transferable college credits or an Associate's degree. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Early college high schools establish the enabling conditions necessary to prepare students for success in a rigorous, well-structured academic program leading to high school graduation and up to two years of college credit.

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders¹ develop a mission consistent with ECHS Core Principles and a strategy for establishing a shared mission with parents/guardians, students, faculty, and staff. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conversion schools plan process to develop and share mission with all stakeholders. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, staff, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders believe all students will achieve and reaffirm that belief in written materials on the school. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders understand depth and breadth of preparing targeted population for college expectations. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and staff use student data, recording strengths and weaknesses, to plan targeted strategies for academic progress. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, local district, and key stakeholders develop a school design plan that ensures that the school has autonomy over key factors to its success. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
School culture and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders collaborate to develop a school design plan to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structure the school day; ○ Address state, district, and college requirements; ○ Define path to achieve up to two years of college credit; ○ Involve middle grades; ○ Define academic and social supports. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders design school to meet the attributes of early college high schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Common focus on research-based goals and intellectual mission; ○ Shared, clear, high expectations and standards, with all students completing a coherent, rigorous course of study; ○ Small, personalized learning environments with no more than 400 students per high school (Early college high school may also link with feeder elementary and middle schools); ○ Respect and responsibility among students, among teachers, and between students and teachers; ○ Time for teachers/staff to collaborate and for the inclusion of parents and the community in an education partnership; ○ Emphasis on performance, with students promoted based on demonstrated competency; and ○ Technology used as a tool for designing and delivering engaging and imaginative curricula. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

¹ Depending on the model, key stakeholders may include parents, guardians, students, teachers, postsecondary faculty, district leadership, community-based organizations, community-based agencies, teachers' union, tribal governments, business partners, and/or local policymakers.

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whether site is on or off campus, the school, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders promote college-going culture in school and college-going aspirations in students, e.g., orientation activities, college IDs, access to facilities, seminars on campus, mentoring or tutoring programs. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and intermediary identify classroom and administrative space on college campus. ▪ If site is off campus, school, intermediary, and postsecondary partner ensure that separate and adequate classroom and administrative facilities are provided on campus. 	5 4 3 2 1 5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Student recruitment and selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders develop a recruitment plan that identifies district or other parameters, is specific and appropriate to reach targeted students as described in the ECHS Core Principles, identifies selection criteria to be communicated to the community, and involves middle school counselors, community organizations, and other key stakeholders. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Teacher retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders articulate a strategy to recruit and retain teachers that incorporates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Job descriptions and requirements, e.g., extensive content knowledge, demonstrated success with target population; ○ Peer mentoring program; ○ Professional learning community, e.g., common planning time; and ○ Professional development opportunities. ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders recruit highly qualified secondary and postsecondary faculty who possess extensive subject knowledge and who have demonstrated success working with the target population. 	5 4 3 2 1 5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High Low Med High

Early college high schools provide comprehensive student supports based on students' academic and social needs.

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Personalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school, postsecondary partner, and key community stakeholders articulate a student support strategy that includes: 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Academic supports based on quantitative and qualitative data, e.g., faculty support, mentoring, tutoring, summer bridge programs; 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advising supports based on qualitative and quantitative data, e.g., advisories, guidance and counseling, individual learning plan. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The student support strategy specifies how each student will be known well by faculty and staff. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, partner, and key stakeholders identify agencies that provide services to students that are unavailable in the school, e.g., health clinic, DSS, DYS, DMH. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Respect, responsibility, and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School involves all stakeholders in developing a culture of respect and responsibility that involves older students as mentors for entering students. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School community develops a handbook with clear discipline policies and consequences to distribute and discuss with students, staff, and families. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school develops a process for hearing and responding to student voice. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Transfer and articulation plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, in concert with postsecondary partner and key stakeholders, develops a plan for a smooth transition from high school to college that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identification of transferable courses, articulation options, and requirements to enter public postsecondary institutions; ○ Methods to assist students and families to complete college applications, apply for financial aid (FAFSA); ○ Preparation of students for college-entrance exams, e.g., SAT, ACT, Accuplacer; ○ Strategies to acclimate students to the support services available at college. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Early college high schools demonstrate effective instructional practices.

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)					PRIORITY		
Curriculum and instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leader, postsecondary partner, high school and college faculty, and key stakeholders understand college expectations, state and district performance standards, and the intermediary's benchmarks. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty align their curricula. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty identify effective instructional strategies based on research to meet a wide range of student needs, e.g., differentiated instruction, scaffolding, project-based learning, technology integration. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty use student data and research to understand the challenges of preparing targeted students for success in a rigorous academic program, including college courses. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty define literacy and numeracy as school-wide initiatives and choose instructional strategies that reinforce that commitment, e.g., writing to learn, literacy across the content areas. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty determine how to appropriately integrate technology into instruction. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, high school and postsecondary faculty, and key stakeholders identify appropriate culturally-sensitive materials for target population. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Student assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty develop procedures to use data on entering students to identify strengths and needs, plan programs, and design professional development. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty review variety of diagnostic and standardized assessments available and select one(s) to meet their needs. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty identify processes that enable students to assess their own learning. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty develop a process to gather and analyze performance data consistently and regularly across the school to inform instruction and professional development. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty develop a process and structure to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment with college expectations. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools select instruments to survey all stakeholders' satisfaction with school culture, student support, professional development, parent and community participation, and other aspects of the school. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)					PRIORITY		
Professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, high school faculty, and postsecondary partner design a professional development plan, based on data on incoming students and needs of teachers that is embedded in the school, allows for ongoing collaborative learning, and provides ongoing support to teachers to implement effective, alternative instructional strategies. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School develops a schedule that provides common planning time for teachers. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and intermediary identify professional development providers. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty have a common professional development experience before school opens, e.g., establishing a common vision; developing curriculum that aligns high school and college expectations; identifying a range of student supports; addressing data analysis, research-based instructional strategies, and classroom management strategies; developing a common process for cross-classroom visitations. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High

Early college high schools establish and institutionalize strong secondary/postsecondary partnerships to ensure student success.

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Collaborative leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ University/college president and board identify early college high school's value to the university/college. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Postsecondary partner (e.g., provost, deans, assistant to the president, faculty) is an integral part of the planning team for the early college high school. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intermediary facilitates a multi-year Memorandum of Understanding, charter, or agreement between secondary and postsecondary institutions that outlines essentials, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mission and goals based on the ECHS Core Principles; ○ Academic plan for achieving up to two years of college credit; ○ Roles and responsibilities of all entities; ○ Staffing; ○ Use of facilities; ○ Student support; ○ Professional development; ○ Pre-requisites for enrollment in college courses; ○ Payment of fees, tuition, books, liability, transportation, and food. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Planning and coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School and postsecondary partner identify a person(s) to coordinate, plan, and scaffold activities to ensure a smooth transition for students. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and postsecondary partner introduce representatives of academic departments to the mission of the early college high school. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Early college high schools engage students, parents, community, business, and public agencies in developing and sustaining the schools.

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader includes all stakeholders in establishing vision and mission of the school. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader designs and conducts informational meetings with postsecondary partner to make explicit the need/desire for community involvement. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders encourage business partnerships and involvement of policymakers to ensure sustainability. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader involves all necessary district/postsecondary partners in school design to ensure plan for completion of two years of college credit. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Outreach and recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders develop postsecondary, family, and community outreach and student recruitment materials that clearly convey school mission, organization, and design. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, partner, and key stakeholders reach out to postsecondary community through forums, town meetings, and orientation sessions to communicate and develop buy-in related to school mission and goals. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Parental/ family involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders, develop a process for parental involvement including ways to introduce families and parents/ guardians to the school and to provide ongoing opportunities for input regarding school development. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School and postsecondary partner, in concert with key stakeholders, develop a process for community engagement to introduce community partners to the school and provide ongoing opportunities for input regarding school development, e.g., informational meetings, town meetings, forums. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders encourage business partnerships and involvement of policymakers to ensure sustainability. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governance committee develops a process to gather data on the number and types of involvement of community members, business partners, and policymakers. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governance committee begins to design a report to stakeholders that includes data on student performance, attendance, persistence, and annual surveys of stakeholders' satisfaction. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Early college high schools develop plans for long-term sustainability.

BENCHMARK	BEGINNING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders identify and engage key interest groups, lawmakers, and regulatory bodies to educate them about the promise of ECHS and its policy needs. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders identify barriers, e.g., funding, teacher certification, college access, dual credit. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders identify and begin to seek needed waivers and conduct negotiations with state and local entities/agencies. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders cooperate with other ECHS intermediaries and networks working in the state, when applicable. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary, postsecondary partners, intermediary, and key stakeholders develop five-year budget including start-up costs and projection of actual costs for items such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School planning; ○ Implementation of ECHS Core Principles and seven attributes of early college high schools; ○ Curriculum development; ○ Transportation; ○ Secondary/postsecondary collaboration; ○ Instructional design; ○ Staffing; ○ Supports to meet students' academic and personal needs; ○ Inclusion of two years of "free" college credits, fees, and books. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget includes grants; local, state, and federal funding; revenue streams; and philanthropic donations. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Long term school sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders engage institutional partners, community, business, public officials, and others in investigating options and opportunities for financing the long-term costs of the school. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Benchmark Tool for Early College High Schools: Implementation Phase

Students completing early college high schools graduate with a high school diploma and up to two years of college credit.

BENCHMARK	IMPLEMENTING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Student attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders track and quantify attendance of students in high school and college. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders adjust and refine their strategy in order to improve student attendance rate in each subsequent year. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Student persistence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders track and quantify data on persistence of students. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders adjust and refine their strategy to improve the retention rate of each cohort in subsequent years. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Graduation rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School annually tracks cohorts to ensure that students are on schedule to graduate. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School utilizes and adjusts plan to continually increase the number of students who are on schedule to graduate in each subsequent year. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
College credit and degrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School utilizes and adjusts plan to continually ensure that students are on schedule to graduate with up to two years of college credit or an Associate's degree. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Early college high schools establish the enabling conditions necessary to prepare students for success in a rigorous, well-structured academic program leading to high school graduation and up to two years of college credit.

BENCHMARK	IMPLEMENTING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School revisits mission annually with parents/guardians, students, high school and postsecondary faculty, and community members to renew, adjust, and reinforce. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders make explicit the goal of up to two years of college credit and how to accomplish that goal. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and partners share and use research-based information on underprepared students. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and partners collect, analyze, and share data on improved student performance. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School has the necessary autonomies, e.g., it controls budget, staffing, curriculum, schedule, student data, and professional development. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
School culture and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders implement school design plan, with full regard to school's mission and the seven attributes of early college high schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Common focus on research-based goals and intellectual mission; ○ Shared, clear, high expectations and standards, with all students completing a coherent, rigorous course of study; ○ Small, personalized learning environments with no more than 400 students per high school (Early college high school may also link with feeder elementary and middle schools); ○ Respect and responsibility among students, among teachers, and between students and teachers; ○ Time for teachers/staff to collaborate and for the inclusion of parents and the community in an education partnership; ○ Emphasis on performance, with students promoted based on demonstrated competency; ○ Technology used as a tool for designing and delivering engaging and imaginative curricula. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders assess effectiveness of and refine components of school design plan to ensure improved student performance in subsequent years. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School and postsecondary partner continue to promote a college-going culture through a variety of activities on campus, assess the activities' effectiveness, and refine them to ensure an increase in the number of graduates who enter college. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School and postsecondary partner (with intermediary, if necessary) regularly review and negotiate space needs. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Student recruitment and selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders collect and analyze data on student population and regularly refine recruitment plan to ensure fidelity with ECHS Core Principles. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Teacher retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders collect data on teacher recruitment and retention, assess the effectiveness of their strategy, and refine it as needed. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Early college high schools provide comprehensive student supports based on students' academic and social needs.

BENCHMARK	IMPLEMENTING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)					PRIORITY		
Personalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leader and teachers identify students and families in need of support services, refer them to services, and track effectiveness of those services. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty and staff continuously improve student support through assessment of formative data, student outcomes, and data from annual surveys of stakeholders. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School, partner, and key stakeholders regularly review and refine the student support strategy to ensure that the needs of students and families are met effectively. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has the capacity to address students' needs and interests. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each student receives customized academic support and advising to achieve college goals. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Respect, responsibility, and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leader and faculty identify and share effective classroom management strategies. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discipline referrals, suspensions, and expulsions are tracked and recorded, and are considerably lower than district average. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leader, high school and postsecondary faculty, and students revise handbook to reflect college policies and expectations. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student voice informs culture, e.g., student organizations, forums, presentations, mentoring, advising. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Transfer and articulation plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School develops a post-graduation plan for each student that includes continuing education, and school and postsecondary faculty assist student and family to complete applications and financial aid forms. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff, students, and families have a clear understanding of transfer policies and requirements for the state's public postsecondary institutions. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College identifies a counselor for high school students, who works with high school faculty and guidance counselors, to ensure a smooth transition. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School arranges and encourages visits to different colleges and debriefs visits with students. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High

Early college high schools demonstrate effective instructional practices.

BENCHMARK	IMPLEMENTING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)					PRIORITY		
Curriculum and instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High school and postsecondary faculty, students, and key stakeholders are knowledgeable of college expectations, state and district performance standards, and intermediary's benchmarks. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High school and postsecondary faculty assess the alignment of high school and postsecondary curriculum and refine, when necessary. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty regularly review and discuss proven instructional practices that inform their teaching, analyze student outcome data, and adapt their practice as needed. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High school and postsecondary faculty use instructional strategies to simultaneously address basic needs and accelerate student learning, e.g., differentiated instruction. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Content area and postsecondary faculty include significant amounts of reading and writing in their classes. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All students have access to technology that supports and enhances learning. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High school and postsecondary faculty provide culturally-competent instruction and use culturally-sensitive materials that affirm and build on students' background. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Student assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools schedule specific times during the school day and year for faculty to meet to review and discuss evidence of improved student performance. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School uses multiple forms of assessment (teacher-made tests, standardized tests, performance based assessment, portfolios, exhibitions) to evaluate student progress and to target instruction. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students have opportunities to assess their own learning and that of their peers using self-assessments and rubrics. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Continuous improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty refine their data-driven process to result in improved student performance and more targeted professional development. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and college faculty assess effectiveness of secondary/postsecondary alignment based on improved student performance. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School conducts annual surveys of all stakeholders and uses results to inform academic practices at the school. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School conducts ongoing research on the efficacy of school design using indicators including attendance, persistence, discipline, standardized test scores, course taking and credit attainment, quality and effectiveness of student supports. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High

BENCHMARK	IMPLEMENTING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty annually refine the school's professional development plan based on student outcome data and teachers' needs. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Common planning time during the day is used for embedded professional development for high school teachers and postsecondary faculty, e.g., looking at student work, sharing learning from workshops and conferences, discussing current research on teaching and learning. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school and postsecondary faculty identify professional development needs and suggest professional development opportunities or consultants to address those needs. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary and postsecondary faculty observes each other's classrooms, provide feedback, and share effective pedagogy. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Early college high schools establish and institutionalize strong secondary/postsecondary partnerships to ensure student success.

BENCHMARK	IMPLEMENTING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Collaborative leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner continues to be a member on the decision-making body for the early college high school, e.g., helping to determine direction of the school, continuing to support the partnership. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary, postsecondary partner, and intermediary review periodically and renew commitment to an MOU, charter, or agreement. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Planning and coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ College liaison coordinates joint activities and is responsible, with high school and postsecondary faculty, for the social and academic transition of students to meet the challenges of college-level work. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Postsecondary academic departments are encouraged to be engaged in ongoing curriculum and instruction planning with high school faculty. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High

Early college high schools engage students, parents, community, business, and public agencies in developing and sustaining the schools.

BENCHMARK	IMPLEMENTING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)					PRIORITY		
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader moves to distributed leadership to involve stakeholders in meaningful work with the school to improve student performance. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Informational meetings become basis for continued involvement with the school and students. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader works with postsecondary faculty to facilitate clear expectations for future work with students. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Outreach and recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partners, and key stakeholders use, assess effectiveness of, and refine community outreach and recruitment materials. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partners, and key stakeholders reinforce the school's mission and goals within the school and postsecondary institution through forums, open houses, orientation meetings, retreats, and school conferences. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Parental/ family involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, and key stakeholders quantify the frequency and types of participation by parents/ guardians, analyze data, and refine their parental/family involvement process. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents, families, and guardians are regularly engaged in meaningful academic tasks, such as reviewing and discussing student work, portfolios, and assessments. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School offers opportunities for parents, guardians, and families to strengthen their role in promoting their student's academic and social success, e.g., conversations about college expectations, ways to help with homework. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business and community organizations provide support to school, e.g., mentors, tutors, scholarships, career counseling, grants, and technology. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School leader and high school faculty work with business partners and other stakeholders to design opportunities for students beyond the classroom walls, e.g., internships, community service, jobs. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governance committee tracks business and community involvement, e.g., types of involvement, levels of success. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The governance committee regularly reports to business and other community stakeholders regarding school progress, expanded to ultimately include college-going data. 	5	4	3	2	1	Low	Med	High

Early college high schools develop plans for long-term sustainability.

BENCHMARK	IMPLEMENTING PHASE	LEVEL OF PRACTICE (5 = most visible)	PRIORITY
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders conduct ongoing education campaign of key policymakers and interest groups, e.g., invite policymakers to visit schools, meet with local legislative staff, and present at conferences. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders generate and act on plans for overcoming identified barriers, e.g., seeking needed waivers and conducting negotiations with state and local entities/agencies. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders develop and carry out advocacy strategies for meeting longer-term ECHS policy and financing needs. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders continue to cooperate with other ECHS intermediaries and networks working in the state, when applicable, to meet long-term ECHS policy and financing needs. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, and key stakeholders review, revise, and identify issues and five-year budget based on actual costs and revenue, brainstorm options, and pursue most viable ones. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High
Long term school sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School, postsecondary partner, intermediary, community, business, public officials, and others specify and implement plans for financing the long-term costs of the school, e.g., a scholarship fund, long-term agreements for free or discounted tuition and fees, use of per pupil allocations to pay for college and school cost, establishment of a foundation to support the school. 	5 4 3 2 1	Low Med High