



NEWS

Texas
Education
Agency

1701 NORTH CONGRESS AVENUE

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-1494

(512) 463-9000

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TEA announces \$5.1 million in new funding for Early College High Schools

AUSTIN – With 21 Early College High Schools (ECHS) in operation, and an additional eight slated to open in August, the state of Texas is a national leader among states opening these innovative high schools. Only North Carolina, with 42 ECHSs, has more schools than Texas.

Early College High Schools are innovative high schools that allow students who may not otherwise consider attending college an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and two years of college credit.

In June, the Texas Education Agency will make approximately \$5.2 million available for funding ECHS Cycle 3 grants during the December 1, 2008, to May 31, 2011, project period. The program will support the planning and implementation of approximately five to 10 new schools and expansion of approximately 10-15 existing schools to serve middle school students. The target population includes first-generation college-goers, low-income students, students of color, and English language learners.

Early colleges provide “rigor with support”. They offer students numerous dual credit and Advanced Placement courses and provide counseling, mentoring, and tutoring assistance in order to help students succeed. Most Early Colleges are located on the college or university campus that they partner with.

In order to help explain the ECHS Model, the Texas Education Agency will host presentations in five different parts of the state entitled, *Understanding the ECHS Model*. Two of the foremost experts in ECHS design in Texas, Pam Tackett and Mel Fuller, will explain how the model works and why it is so promising. Attendees will learn about the difference between an ECHS and dual credit program. Attendees will also learn how ECHSs enable at-risk students to graduate from high school and earn 60 college credit hours. Anyone who is interested in learning more about ECHS is welcome to RSVP and attend. To RSVP, send an email to echs@tea.state.tx.us. Presentations will be held in the following locations:

- Midland: Wednesday, June 11, 2008, 9:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m. – Midland College, Advanced Technology Center, 3200 West Cuthbert, Lecture Hall
- Fort Worth: Wednesday, June 11, 2008, 10 a.m.-noon – Tarrant County College, 4801 Marine Creek Parkway, George Saenz Conference Center, Room WACB 1123

- Baytown : Monday, June 16, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.– Lee College Student Center, 2nd Floor, Bayer Conference Center
- Amarillo: Tuesday, June 17, 2008, 10:30am-12:30pm – Region 16 Education Service Center, 5800 Bell Street, Red River Room
- Kilgore: Thursday, June 19, 2008, 1 p.m.-3 p.m. – Region 7 Education Service Center, 1909 North Longview Street, Dogwood Room

Early College High School Program are part of the Texas High School Project, a public-private partnership working to ensure that all Texas students leave high school prepared for college and careers in the 21st century economy. The Texas High School Project is a strategic alliance of the Texas Education Agency, the Governor's Office, Texas Legislature, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Michael and Susan Dell Foundation and the Communities Foundation of Texas.

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