



Alexander Waldie, M.Ed.
October 13, 2014
North Carolina State University
alwaldie@ncsu.edu

First-Year Transfer Students: Supporting Early College High School Graduates in Transition

+ Learning Outcomes

- Participants will learn about the similarities and differences between ECHS students and other first-year or transfer student populations.
- Participants will discuss how modified approaches to academic advising can enhance ECHS students' academic and career exploration experiences while still working towards appropriate graduation requirements.
- Participants will evaluate the strengths and challenges of current resources on their campus that serve ECHS populations, and learn how they can utilize or modify services that already exist on campus to better serve this population.
- Participants will leave with a better knowledge of best practices in working with ECHS graduates on their campuses.



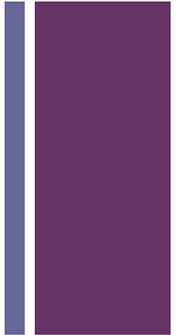
Background of ECHS Programs



- First Early College High School (ECHS) programs began in 2002.
 - Created by partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and thirteen other partner organizations.
 - Jobs for the Future serves as the current coordinator and data collector of ECHS programs nationally (Webb & Gerwin, 2014).
- Grew out of concern that students from traditionally underrepresented populations (minority, first-gen, and students from low SES backgrounds) were not completing high school or college at same rates as general population, impacting lifetime earnings and future growth of American workforce (Gates Foundation, 2009).



Background of ECHS Programs (cont'd)



- Vision to establish small, public schools of choice with no more than 400-500 students and smaller faculty to pupil ratios, providing smaller, more supportive classroom experience to increase college readiness and transition skills (Kaniuka & Vickers, 2010).
- A lottery-based system is typically used to help ensure a fair selection process when determining which students can participate in the program (Berger et al., 2013; DiMaria, 2013; Edmunds, 2012; Fischetti, MacKain, & Smith, 2011; Webb, 2004).
- In a little more than a decade, the ECHS model has grown to produce over 280 ECHS programs that serve more than 80,000 students across 29 states and the District of Columbia (Webb & Gerwin, 2014).



Background of ECHS Programs (cont'd)



- The ECHS Initiative has established five core principals that serve to guide and lay a foundation for all ECHS programs nationally:
 1. Early college schools are committed to serving students underrepresented in higher education;
 2. Early college schools are created and sustained by a local education agency, a higher education institution, and the community, all of whom are jointly accountable for student success;



Background of ECHS Programs (cont'd)



3. Early college schools and their higher education partners and community jointly develop an integrated academic program so all students earn 1 to 2 years of transferable college credit leading to college completion;
4. Early college schools engage all students in a comprehensive support system that develops academic and social skills as well as the behaviors and conditions necessary for college completion; and
5. Early college schools and their higher education and community partners work with intermediaries to create conditions and advocate for supportive policies that advance the early college movement. (Jobs for the Future [JFF], 2009)



Program Effectiveness at HS Level



- Data shows promising results for program effectiveness at the high school level:
 - ECHSs attract high numbers of students from racial or ethnic minorities (80 percent) and low-income families (70 percent) (Berger, Adelman, & Cole, 2010, p. 338-339).
 - ECHS graduates earn anywhere from a few college credits up to an associate's degree (Berger, Adelman, & Cole, 2010, p. 338-339). Average credits earned range from 23-30 (DiMaria, 2013; Edmunds, 2012).
 - ECHS students graduate at higher rates than their traditional high school peers (86 percent versus 81 percent, respectively), and are more likely to enroll in both two-year and four-year institutions (80 percent versus 71 percent, respectively) (Berger et al., 2013, p. v).



Program Effectiveness at HS Level



- Data shows promising results for program effectiveness at the high school level:
 - 89 percent of programs reported offering some form of academic or social support class focused on college readiness (e.g. college life-skills course, introduction to university studies, etc.), and 84 percent offered a formal tutoring program (Berger, Adelman, & Cole, 2010).
 - Students report benefitting from established support structures (i.e. participation in learning community model, enrollment in college success seminar course, and early academic alert system), better interactions with high school faculty and staff, and increased parent engagement with high school (Kaniuka & Vickers, 2010; Leonard, 2013).

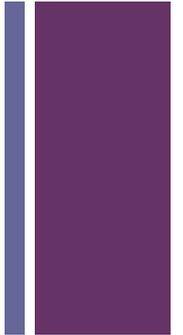


Post Graduate Success Less Clear...



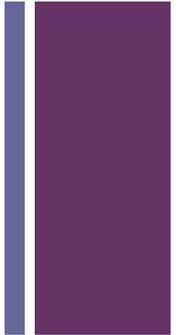
- Initial data on college degree attainment for ECHS graduates indicates that numbers are headed in the right direction:
 - Compared to traditional high school peers, research shows that attending an ECHS has a statistically significant positive impact on degree attainment, and this effect remained in place even after allowing for a fifth year of study for traditional students (Berger et al., 2013).
 - 22.2% of ECHS earning post-secondary degree vs 1.9% of comparison group
 - Minority students were 29 times more likely to earn a degree than the comparison group, while low-income students were 25 times more likely to earn a degree (Berger et al., 2013).

+ Challenges



- Acknowledgement that ECHS probably are doing decent job of preparing targeted populations to be college ready
- College readiness as defined by Conley (2008) consists of:
 - key cognitive strategies such as problem solving, reasoning, argumentation, and research;
 - academic knowledge and skills associated with core subjects'
 - academic behaviors such as strong time management and study skills;
 - and contextual skills and awareness of the various processes associated with applying, acquiring financial aid, matriculating, and navigating campus resources.

+ Challenges



- But...
 - Are those skills staying with the student as they transition to higher ed. institutions?
 - Traditional college readiness models don't necessarily account for issues related to cultural identity, academic identity (am I a freshman or a junior? I'm the class of what now?)
 - Students still face similar transitional issues when going through the process of entering a new major life event as traditional students do (Grites, 2013, Schlossberg, 2005), and might face "transfer shock," especially at high performing institutions (Thurmond, 2007).
 - Anecdotal evidence that these students often struggle during first semester on campus.
 - Low hanging fruit in terms of increasing graduation rates, if we can get them to persist.

+ How do we support ECHS graduates on campus?

- How do we know who these students are on our campuses? Does your institution track these students, and if so, how?
- What resources are currently in place to support these students on your campus, if any?
 - Are there common resources already available that they can tap into? How do we lead these students to the appropriate resources early on?
- Is there a need to think about new resources for this population that don't already exist?
 - If so, who manages that process? How would an ECHS graduate know how to seek out departments that offer resources specific to their population?





How do we support ECHS graduates on campus?



- What might the advising process look like for these students? Should they have a different advising protocol than traditional students, or is it simply a matter of training advisors on campus?
 - How might we need to change academic and career exploration experiences to serve this population?
- How do we get students who might want to shed the “freshman” image to programming or events catered toward their success?
- How might we help them as it relates to identity issues (cultural, familial, campus, etc.)?
 - Is your campus aware of this student population and the attributes that make them unique? How might your campus help inform faculty and staff about these students and how to serve them?



How do we support ECHS graduates on campus?



- Should there be a “recovery” process to help students who struggle during their first semester? What might that look like?
- How do we know when we are being successful in serving these students? What metrics should we be using to determine success (i.e. retention rates, GPA, student experience surveys, etc.)?



Works Cited

Berger, A., Adelman, N., & Cole, S. (2010). The Early College High School Initiative: An Overview of Five Evaluation Years. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 85(3), 333–347. doi:10.1080/0161956X.2010.491697

Berger, A., Turk-Bicakci, L., Garet, M., Song, M., Knudson, J., Haxton, C., ... Cassidy, L. (2013). *Early College , Early Success : Early College High School Initiative Impact Study* (p. 121).

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2009). *College Ready*. Retrieved from <https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/Documents/College-ready-education-plan-brochure.pdf>

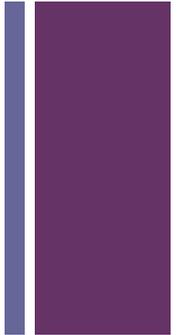
Conley, D. T. (2008). Rethinking college readiness. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2008(144), 3–13. doi:10.1002/he.321

DiMaria, F. (2013). Getting a Leg Up on College via Early College High Schools. *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, 23(11), 10–12.

Edmunds, J. A. (2012). Early Colleges: A New Model of Schooling Focusing on College Readiness. *New Directions for Higher Education*, (158), 81–90. doi:10.1002/he.20017

Fischetti, J., MacKain, S., & Smith, R. (2011). Mr Watson, come here . . . : The performance of early college students in their first year at the university and the challenge to P-16 education. *Improving Schools*, 14(1), 48–64. doi:10.1177/1365480211398232

Grites, T. J. (2013). Successful Transitions From Two-Year to Four-Year Institutions. *New Directions for Higher Education*, (162), 61–68. doi:10.1002/he





Works Cited

- Jobs for the Future [JFF]. (2009). *Core principles*. Retrieved from http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/ECHSI_Core_principles.pdf
- Kaniuka, T. S., & Vickers, M. (2010). Lessons Learned: How Early College High Schools Offer a Pathway for High School Reform. *NASSP Bulletin*, 94(3), 165–183.
doi:10.1177/0192636510384982
- Leonard, J. (2013). Maximizing College Readiness for All Through Parental Support. *School Community Journal*, 23(1), 183–202.
- Schlossberg, N. K., Waters, E., & Goodman, J. (2005). *Counseling Adults in Transition: Linking Practice With Theory* (p. 307). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Thurmond, K. (2007). Transfer Shock: Why is a Term Forty Years Old Still Relevant? Retrieved from <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Dealing-with-transfer-shock.aspx>
- Webb, M. (2004). *What Is the Cost of Planning and Implementing Early College High School?* (p. 45).
- Webb, M., & Gerwin, C. (2014). *Early college expansion: Propelling students to postsecondary success, at a school near you* (p. 22). Washington, DC.

