

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2020

COLLEGE DISTRICT:

INDEPENDENT

SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Austin Community College (ACC)

Austin Independent School District

The institutions named above enter into the following agreement for the implementation of an Early College High School, as designated by the Texas Education Agency under the authority of the Texas Education Code 29.908(b) and Texas Administrative Code 102.1091.

The purpose of this agreement is to provide an opportunity for low-income, first generation college goers, and those who are statistically underrepresented in higher education, who face challenges that prohibit a smooth transition into postsecondary education, to earn a high school diploma and up to 60 hours of college credit and/or an Associate's Degree upon graduation from high school.

The Partners desire to collaborate in the operation of an Early College High School (ECHS) program to prepare students for successful college and career transitions through the integration of high school, college, and career services with a commitment to collaboration in planning, implementation, and continuous improvement.

The services provided by this partnership are pursuant to the authorities of:

- (a) Texas Education Code 29.908(b) allows for the creation of Early College Educational Programs through an articulation agreement between Independent School Districts and Institutions of Higher Education for the purpose of providing high school students the opportunity to earn up to 60 hours of college credit and/or an Associate's Degree; and
- (b) Texas Administrative Code 102.1091 allows for the implementation of Early College Educational Programs as Early College High Schools, through an application process that includes approval and oversight by the Texas Education Agency (TEA);
- (c) Having been approved by the TEA to create an ECHS partnership, the Partners enter into this articulation agreement.

By this Agreement it is mutually understood and agreed by the Partners as follows:

1) Term and Provisions for Termination

The term of this Agreement shall be three (3) years from September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2020, including an annual review. This Agreement may be extended for additional terms of one (1) or more years upon the mutual consent of the Partners

evidenced by an extension agreement entered into no later than August 31st. Either partner may initiate a review process of this Agreement to renegotiate any of the provisions. Any provision of the preceding paragraph notwithstanding, either Partner may terminate this Agreement prior to the expiration of the term hereof for good cause, or by written mutual agreement of the Partners. Termination shall include provisions for allowing ECHS student cohorts enrolled at the time of such termination to complete their college courses of study through the date of their expected high school graduation.

2) Payment

AISD shall pay for any tuition, fees, or cost of textbooks not waived by ACC. ACC shall invoice AISD quarterly for services provided, as agreed upon. Payment is due within 30 days of invoice date. ACC shall waive all tuition and fees for courses taken by AISD ECHS students in fulfillment of the requirements for their degree or certification plans, up to 60 credit hours.

3) Joint Responsibilities

ACC and AISD will collaborate in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of ECHS programs, processes and services through a joint Steering Committee and specialized work groups as needed. The Steering Committee will convene monthly or as needed; with the Steering Committee comprised of college, district, and campus leadership staff providing the direction and leading the collaborative efforts of these to further the goals of the ECHS partnership.

4) Student Application and Acceptance

- Application and recruiting for completion of the Associate's Degree will be for 9th and 10th grade students only. 11th and 12th grade students will take college classes through a dual credit option outside the parameters of the ECHS Program.
- All students entering 9th or 10th grade during the 2017-2018 school year (and following) will be eligible to enter the program. Student data will be used to provide the appropriate supports so they are successful in completing the Associate's Degree.
- If the number of applicants exceeds the number of seats available in the program, there will be a blind lottery to determine which students are accepted into the program. A waiting list consisting of students who were not accepted into the program will be developed. If an accepted student in the program either moves outside of the attendance zone or chooses not to enter the program before the semester, the next student on the waiting list will be offered entry into the program.

5) Austin Independent School District (AISD) Responsibilities:

A. Program Management.

- AISD shall provide a principal or director who is assigned 100% to the ECHS and has scheduling, hiring, and budget authority.

- AISD shall provide an Early College High School Coordinator to oversee the administration of the program.
- AISD will administer the comprehensive high school program to include the responsibility for college-readiness and high school graduation.
- AISD will provide SACS-Qualified, High School Certified Faculty (SQHSCF), school-district staff resources, student records support, and scheduling support necessary to deliver the agreed-upon college course sections to support the ECHS program. AISD will invite ACC department representatives to participate in the hiring process for any SQHSCF the district is considering hiring to teach in an ECHS program.
- AISD will provide support to ACC faculty and adjunct faculty, as well as SQHSCF, to assist them with successful program implementation. Regular meetings with ACC staff and district/campus staff will be held to ensure successful program implementation.
- AISD will provide office space and services (e.g., security, custodial, building access, mail, etc.) as needed for the ECHS program.
- AISD will provide operate the following programs at the following campuses:
 - Reagan High School (Comprehensive Program)
 - LBJ High School (Comprehensive Program)
 - Travis High School (School within a School Model)
 - *Eastside Memorial High School (School within a School Model)
 - *Crockett High School (School within a School Model)
 - *Lanier High School (School within a School Model)
 - *pending TEA approval
- AISD will coordinate with ACC staff to share information and coordinate policies regarding grading periods, courses of study, curriculum alignment, instructional calendar, student enrollment, attendance, and textbooks.
- AISD agrees to share data with ACC to provide TEA reports in the following areas:
 - Credit attempted / Pass rates
 - GPA
 - EOCs
 - SAT/ACT/PSAT
 - SI Readiness by grade level
 - ECHS staff qualifications
- AISD will create a textbook committee to select textbooks. AISD will make every attempt to sell back books to the college or bookstore before they become obsolete.

B. Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development

- AISD will ensure the vertical alignment of college readiness skills and a college going culture for students feeding into ECHS and students currently enrolled in the ECHS.
- AISD will participate in planning to ensure that the necessary dual credit classes are scheduled in a timely manner to facilitate the goals of the ECHS.
- AISD will assist with campus orientation and information to ACC faculty who are not part of the high school faculty, and will provide information about the standards of conduct for school district faculty and any rule and regulations unique to the high school environment. AISD staff will assist ACC ECHS program staff and ACC faculty with communication and problem solving.
- AISD will provide release time as necessary for SQHSCF staff to attend college orientation sessions and to participate in college staff development activities as necessary to maintain good standing in the ACC academic department.
- AISD will provide a college version of AVID training for all ECHS staff.

C. College and Career Activities

AISD will provide support as needed for college-related activities needed to implement the ECHS, including activities scheduled during the school day.

D. Resources and Data

- AISD will assist in the development of a data-sharing agreement that complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and that provides for the sharing of all allowable student-level information among institutions.
- Specifically, AISD will collect and maintain the following data: articulation to 4 year IHE; level of entry to IHE; enrollment and retention rates; and leaver codes/attrition by grade.
- AISD will implement improvement efforts, as needed and will work to increase participation in IHE activities.

E. Teaching Eligibility/Staffing

- AISD will facilitate the identification of SQHSCF and their participation in the ACC faculty hiring process.

- AISD will provide scheduling and planning information for SQHSCF interviews to include ACC representatives as part of credentials review and interview committees.
- If SQHSCF are approved by ACC academic departments to teach ACC courses, AISD will allow release time for such SQHSCF to attend any required ACC department meetings or professional development.
- AISD administration will facilitate adherence to requirements imposed by ACC academic departments to ensure the rigor of coursework and college-level standards among SQHSCF such as requiring ECHS students to take final course exams at an ACC campus testing center.

F. College Counseling, Guidance, and Student Services

- AISD's Guidance and Counseling Department will facilitate the college enrollment of students into the ECHS and in meeting all requirements to take the desired ACC courses.
- AISD will facilitate the provision of college student support services, including electronic resources delivered via technology, for students enrolled in college courses.
- AISD will coordinate with ACC ECHS program staff, ACC faculty, and ACC staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) to accommodate students with disabilities enrolled in college courses, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. A high school student's Individualized Education Program may not substitute for a college OSD review to establish required accommodations. AISD will provide all readers, scribes, interpreters, equipment, and other resources needed to deliver required accommodations for students in college courses located at the high school campus.
- ECHS campuses will visit all district middle schools and meet with all 8th graders and encourage them to enroll in an Early College High School Program. Current and former ECHS ambassadors will speak to 8th graders. All 8th grade AVID classes will be personally visited.
- AISD will assist schools in encouraging participation in the Early College High School Program through distribution of promotional materials to middle schools, information sessions for parents, information to middle school principals and counselors, development of a marketing plan, and participation in middle school and high school fairs.
- AISD will purchase college textbooks and other required college instructional materials for participating ECHS students and will assist with the coordination for the receiving, inventory, and distribution of college textbooks for participating ECHS students. For the purposes of this

agreement, AISD is allowed to buy books from the ACC bookstore whenever it is more expedient and efficient.

- AISD will purchase all necessary “blue books,” scantrons, or other testing materials for participating ECHS students.
- AISD will coordinate Texas Success Initiative (TSI) testing for prospective and current ECHS students following college testing guidelines.
- AISD will ensure students receive grades within three school business days of the closure of the semester. Students will be provided the numerical grade form for professors to complete.
- AISD and ACC will review academic calendars and identify conflicting dates (holidays, exams, and national testing dates).
- AISD will ensure open enrollment into the program. Students who do not meet TSI requirements will be provided specific coursework to teach the skills on the TSI test.
- AISD will ensure that counselors hold at least two data reviews meetings with students who are in danger of being dropped from the program.
- AISD will create a process for instructor initiated withdrawals.
- AISD will work with ACC to create and use an early alert system, in dashboard form, to anticipate students at-risk for withdrawing from the program.
- AISD will provide college advisement, including transferability each semester.
- AISD will require its students to adhere to all ACC enrollment and attendance policies as specified in the ACC Handbook.

G. Finances and Transportation

- AISD will provide transportation for students to ACC campuses as necessary to support the goals of the ECHS, including a minimum of six visits per year to the college campus for students not yet taking courses on an ACC campus.
- AISD will reimburse the college at a flat rate of \$2,000 per section for courses taught by ACC faculty in which ECHS students are registered by cohort.

- AISD will reimburse the college at a rate of \$100 per ECHS student for those who register individually for ACC course sections comprised primarily of non-ECHS college students, as long as the course is taught by a non-AISD teacher.
- AISD will pay for all salary and benefits for SQHSCF who are AISD employees assigned to teach ECHS courses.
- AISD will provide each AISD employee teaching a dual course \$500 per section.
- AISD will pay ACC \$100 per course taken by students.

6) Austin Community College (ACC) Responsibilities:

A. Program Management

- Austin Community College District will serve as the guide and support for the operation of the Early College High Schools under the direction of the ACC Director of Early College High Schools and the AISD ECHS Principals/Director or designees.
- ACC staff members will be responsible for delivery of college services and will provide support and assistance to the AISD Early College High School Program, including reporting information designed to improve student retention and completion rates.
- ACC staff will be responsible for all ECHS dual-credit and concurrent enrollment courses working with the AISD ECHS Principal/Director or designee and ACC staff as necessary to deliver the agreed-upon ECHS program.
- ACC staff will provide support to ACC faculty and adjunct faculty, as well as SQHSCF, to assist them with successful program implementation. Regular meetings with ACC staff and district/campus staff will be held to ensure successful program implementation.
- ACC staff will coordinate with AISD to share information and coordinate policies regarding grading periods, courses of study, curriculum alignment, instructional calendar, student enrollment and attendance.
- ACC agrees to share data with AISD to provide TEA reports in the following areas:

Credit attempted / Pass rates
 GPA
 EOCs
 SAT/ACT/PSAT

SI Readiness by grade level
ECHS staff qualifications

- ACC agrees to operate the ECHS Program at the following campuses:

Eastview
Highland
Riverside
South Campus

- ACC agrees that when courses are not assigned two weeks prior to the start of classes, ACC will direct professors to use textbooks that were pre-ordered.

B. Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development

- ACC staff will ensure that dual credit courses are delivered as necessary to meet the goals of the ECHS. Where necessary and agreed upon, ACC staff will create additional ACC class sessions to facilitate the goals of the ECHS.
- ACC staff will provide a campus orientation and information to ACC faculty who are not part of the high school faculty, and will provide information about the standards of conduct for school district faculty and any rules and regulations unique to the high school environment. The ACC staff will assist high school campus staff and ACC faculty with communication and problem solving.
- ACC staff will facilitate SQHSCF participation as appropriate in ACC orientation activities, ACC professional development and required evaluation activities, and college and student success initiatives.
- ACC staff will ensure that the ACC course load of SQHSCF or other faculty are adjusted as needed to deliver instruction necessary to accomplish the goals of the ECHS.
- ACC staff will work with academic departments and ACC faculty to encourage reuse of required textbooks and other materials purchased for ECHS by AISD.
- ACC will create a program to incentivize faculty to work with the dual credit program, including partnering with ECHS teachers.

C. College and Career Activities

ACC staff will provide ACC institutional support for college-related activities needed to implement the ECHS, including facilities for all courses for ECHS students taught on an ACC campus.

D. Resources/Data

- ACC will assist in the development of a data-sharing agreement that complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and

that provides for the sharing of all allowable student-level information among institutions.

- Specifically, ACC will collect and maintain the following data: articulation to 4 year IHE; level of entry to IHE; enrollment and retention rates; and leaver codes/attrition by grade.
- ACC will implement improvement efforts, as needed and will work to increase participation in IHE activities.
- ACC will work with AISD to create and use an early alert system, in dashboard form, to anticipate students at-risk for withdrawing from the program.

E. Teaching Eligibility/Staffing

- ACC staff will assist prospective ACC faculty candidates with information regarding the faculty hiring process, and will serve as a liaison when necessary between the ACC academic department and the candidate.
- ACC staff will work with ACC academic departments to encourage the hiring of SQHSCF who meet department standards for adjunct faculty.
- ACC staff will work with ACC Human Resources and ACC academic departments to ensure that ACC faculty and staff assigned to work on the ECHS campuses have completed the appropriate fingerprinting and criminal background checks.

F. College Counseling, Guidance, and Student Services

- ACC staff will act as a resource for AISD's Guidance and Counseling Department to facilitate the college enrollment process for ECHS students.
- ACC assures open enrollment, as long as students have passed TSI.
- ACC staff will facilitate the provision of student support services, including electronic resources delivered via technology, for students enrolled in college courses.
- ACC staff will coordinate with AISD staff to accommodate students with disabilities enrolled in college courses, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- ACC staff will assist in providing AISD counselors with ECHS information for parents and students materials.
- ACC staff will collaborate with ACC Departments to provide promotional and informational materials about ACC to AISD counseling staff, including

posting materials at the ACC campuses to promote the AISD and ACC partnership and including materials at all ACC campuses where the ECHS Programs are housed.

- ACC staff agree to attend and participate in all AISD events, when requested by AISD, to promote the ECHS Program.
- ACC staff will assist with the coordination for the provision of textbooks.
- ACC staff will collaborate with campus staff and provide support for TSI testing as agreed upon for ECHS students.
- ACC will require all ECHS Program students to complete a midterm student self-report.
- ACC personnel will ensure all ECHS Program students are given midterm grades.
- ACC will ensure grades are submitted no later than the Wednesday after the semester closes.
- ACC will require all professors to submit midterm grades and respond to correspondence from the ECHS counselors in a timely manner. Before withdrawing an ECHS student from a class, the student and AISD must receive prior written notice at least five school days in advance in order for the ECHS counselors to review the records of the affected student. ACC will provide numerical grades to AISD when the professor uses numerical grading within the class.
- ACC will provide AISD student data to assist counselors in monitoring and guiding students' academic process at least every semester.
- ACC will provide AISD ECHS program students access to all ACC facilities, including libraries, study rooms, etc.
- ACC will require its professors to provide grades at midterm and at the end of the course for submission into the early warning system dashboard.
- ACC will send representatives to participate in new student orientation for ECHS program students to review campus policies.

G. Finances.

- ACC will waive standard tuition and fees for ECHS students.
- ACC agrees that it will charge AISD \$100 per student per course taken.

- ACC agrees to waive all lab item costs for ECHS program students.
- ACC will waive the \$2,000 section reimbursement fee outlined in above for sections taught by SQHSCF who are AISD employees. As AISD will pay the cost of all salary and benefits for such SQHSCF, ACC will not provide any additional monetary compensation to such instructors.

6) Authorization

Subject to any annual approvals that may be required by law or by the TEA, the term of the MOU shall commence upon the date that the second of the Partners has signed this MOU ("Commence Date").

7) Amendments

This agreement may only be amended by mutual written agreement of the Partners.

Paul Cruz, Ph.D., Superintendent
Austin Independent School District

Date

Kendall Pace, President
Austin Independent School District Board of Trustees

Date

_____, President /CEO
Austin Community College District

Date

_____, President
Austin Community College District Board of Trustees

Date

