

November 16, 2017

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

Subject: Early College High School Blueprint Redesign and Designation Process Changes

ECHS Redesigned Blueprint

Texas Education Agency (TEA), in collaboration with multiple stakeholders, redesigned the Early College High School (ECHS) Blueprint and designation process. The new Blueprint streamlines the required design elements to give local education agencies more flexibility to meet student outcomes. The new Blueprint is effective in the 2018-2019 school year for existing designated ECHS campuses.

The ECHS Blueprint addresses six benchmarks: 1) target population, 2) partnership agreement, 3) leadership initiative, 4) curriculum and support, 5) academic rigor and readiness, and 6) school design. Each benchmark is tied to multiple design elements. The Blueprint also outlines outcomes-based measures (OBMs) related to access, achievement and attainment. Information on the redesigned ECHS Blueprint including the blueprint itself may be found at www.tea.texas.gov/echs and is linked at the end of this letter.

The ECHS Blueprint outlines three levels of designation:

1. **Provisional Early College** – new ECHSs demonstrate they can implement all the design elements for each benchmark and meet the Provisional Early College OBMs.
2. **Early College** – ECHSs maintain designation by demonstrating they can implement all the design elements for each benchmark and meet the Early College OBMs
3. **Distinguished Early College** – ECHSs that have been designated for at least five years and can demonstrate that they can implement all the design elements for each benchmark and meet the Distinguished Early College OBMs.

Additionally, the Blueprint redesign requires a planning year for all new campuses interested in becoming an ECHS.

ECHS Designation Application – New Early College High Schools

With the implementation of the redesigned ECHS Blueprint, **no NEW ECHS campuses will be designated for the 2018-2019 school year.**

Districts seeking designation for a new ECHS must apply during the 2017-2018 school year to become part of an ECHS planning year. If a campus is accepted into the ECHS planning year, they will spend Spring 2018, as well as the 2018-2019 school year, working with the TEA selected technical assistance provider to plan and establish the required ECHS design elements to meet the required OBMs with the target of implementing in the 2019-2020 school year. Campuses who have successfully met all planning year requirements will be invited to apply for ECHS Provisional Designation for **2019-2020** and upon designation will begin serving students as a Provisional Early College High School.

The planning year application for **NEW** campuses interested in becoming an Early College High School will open on Wednesday, **November 15, 2017.**

Applications for the planning year must be submitted to the TEA through the online application **on or before 5:00 p.m., Friday December 15, 2017**. Applicants will be notified in Spring 2018 if they have been accepted into the planning year process.

2017-2018 ECHS Designees

ECHS campuses **CURRENTLY** designated will have the opportunity to submit a re-designation application as an ECHS for the 2018-2019 school year in February of 2018. A “To the Administrator Addressed” letter in February 2018 will provide additional details.

Application Technical Assistance

A technical assistance webinar will be held to provide information regarding the planning year application. Participation in the technical assistance webinar is not required; however, attendance is strongly encouraged. The webinar will provide potential applicants information about how to access and navigate the online, web-based application system.

Questions regarding the completion of the planning year application should be submitted in writing to ECHS@tea.texas.gov. Answers will be provided during the webinar (which will be recorded) and in an FAQ document.

The ECHS Planning Year Technical Assistance webinar will be held Tuesday, November 28, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. (Central Standard Time). Register at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8504406167637904642>

Timeline Summary

ECHS Designation Timeline		
Date	Who	What
Wednesday 11/15/17	New ECHSs	Online application window opens ccrm.stemcenter.utexas.edu
Tuesday 11/28/17	New ECHSs	Technical Assistance Webinar Register at: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8504406167637904642
Friday 12/15/17	New ECHSs	Application due No late applications will be accepted
Spring 2018	New ECHSs	Planning year applicants will be notified of status
February 2018	Currently designated ECHSs	Re-designation application window opens
Spring 2018	Currently designated ECHS	Notified of designation status for 2018-2019 school year

Please contact ECHS with additional questions via email at ECHS@tea.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Lily Laux
Executive Director, School Programs

[Attachment – 2018-2019 ECHS Blueprint](#)