|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Grant Program:** Early College Planning Grant | **FundCode:** 461  |

|  |
| --- |
| PART III – REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION |

**Background**

In the summer of 2017, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts embarked on a new chapter in college and career readiness for its students, launching a “High Quality College and Career Pathways” (HQCCP) initiative. This initiative is the outgrowth of a number of recent, complementary bodies of work that began several years ago in Massachusetts, overseen by the Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC). The WSC was [created by an Executive Order](http://www.mass.gov/governor/press-office/press-releases/fy2015/exec-order-to-address-workforkforce-skills-gap-signed.html) of Governor Charlie Baker in early 2015. The Cabinet aligns the Executive Offices of Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Housing and Economic Development toward a comprehensive economic growth agenda. The Cabinet is charged with creating and implementing a strategy to ensure that individuals can develop and continuously improve their skills and knowledge to meet the varying needs of employers in the Commonwealth.

Among its priorities is the development of career pathways for residents of the Commonwealth, an effort significantly supported by 1) the early college work based in part on the [report](file:///C%3A/Users/amx/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.Outlook/Y91ZRRS7/cdn.ey.com/parthenon/pdf/perspectives/Early-college_Report_final_web.122016.pdf) by the Parthenon-EY group that led to the creation of Early College Joint Committee in 2016, and 2) the state’s receipt of a highly competitive New Skills for Youth (NSFY) grant from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to address the need at a national level for greater career preparation and access to high quality career pathways.

The Commonwealth has now developed a set of guiding principles that provide a powerful context for all HQCCPs, as well as a more specific set of characteristics that define these pathways. The Commonwealth has identified two types of HQCCPs, referred to as “Innovation Pathways” (IP) and “Early College” (EC) .[[1]](#footnote-1) Secondary schools and institutions of higher education (IHE) have the opportunity to obtain formal designation for these pathways. This will entail a two-step process that will culminate in official designation for those pathways that satisfy rigorous levels of quality.

The Early College Pathway is summarized as follows:

| **Early College** Early college programs are designed to blend elements of high school and college to provide students with the opportunity to experience and complete college level academic coursework on a clearly articulated pathway and simultaneously gain exposure to a variety of career opportunities. Early college programs also reduce the time and expense of earning a college credential while increasing the likelihood of completion.  |
| --- |

These pathways provide participating students in the Commonwealth with supportive, rigorous academic experiences and career development education relevant to their next steps after high school. State agencies will work collaboratively with schools and districts to provide students with equitable access to a pathway deemed a strong individualized fit, with on and off ramps across different pathways throughout high school, ensure that they graduate with a well-designed post-secondary plan, and a robust knowledge of Massachusetts’ workforce opportunities with realities for employment.

The related Pathway designation approval process has been designed collaboratively by the Executive Office of Education, the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Department of Higher Education to ensure that new college and career pathways are carefully designed to offer high quality preparation for college and career in alignment with the Strengthening Career Technical Education in the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) requirements, which was signed into law effective July 1, 2019.

**Rooted in Two Complementary Initiatives**

In January 2017, the Boards of Elementary and Secondary Education and Higher Education jointly approved five **Guiding Principles** for Early College pathways that are also fully relevant to Innovation pathways. To receive designation as either type, an applicant will be required to demonstrate that its pathways are rooted in all five of these guiding principles:

## **Guiding Principle 1: Equitable Access**

*Designated programs should prioritize students underrepresented in education enrollment and completion. To facilitate this, programs should be structured to eliminate barriers to student participation. Design might therefore include, but not be limited to, tuition-free participation, open enrollment without regard to prior academic performance, student supports to promote success, scalability, multiple entry points for students, and student supports to prepare students for entry into the program.*

## **Guiding Principle 2: Guided Academic Pathways**

*Designated programs should be structured around clear and detailed student academic pathways from secondary to post-secondary education with regard to coursework, sequencing, and experiences beyond the classroom. Programs should offer students substantive exposure to career opportunities in high demand fields, allowing them to make an informed decision about which career pathway to pursue.  Students should also be exposed to the authentic experience and academic rigor of postsecondary education.*

## **Guiding Principle 3: Enhanced Student Support**

*Designated programs should incorporate sufficient wraparound services to promote academic success and course completion, taking into consideration the needs of diverse populations of students.*

## **Guiding Principle 4: Connection to Career**

*Designated programs should expose students to a variety of career opportunities, including greater depth in careers relevant to their selected pathway, by providing, for example, opportunities for targeted workforce and career skills development, career counseling, and elements of experiential and work-based learning.*

## **Guiding Principle 5: Effective Partnerships**

*EC programs should be a partnership between at least one institution of higher education and one public secondary school and/or district, EC programs require a formal partnership with either an institution of higher education, a workforce development board, or one or more employers or an employer association. Programs should be sufficient in size to capture economies of scale goals and to ensure long-term sustainability.*

**Detailed characteristics of new pathways**. In addition to the five guiding principles, Massachusetts also chose to adopt six core components identified for high quality career pathways through the New Skills for Youth (NYSF) initiative. The Commonwealth recognizes that a structured pathway that integrates these six characteristics into a coherent set of strategies and services for participating students ensures the quality of the pathway.

The six core characteristics that are required for designation, and that help fulfill the Guiding Principles described above, are:

* **Career Advising**

Career advising supports each student to complete a college and career plan during high school that identifies areas of aptitude and interest, explores career opportunities, and establishes a transition path to college, apprenticeship, and/or employment training. This includes helping students surmount obstacles to completion of their plan.

* **Labor Market Information**

The pathway is justified by labor market information related to employer demand and career opportunities.

* **Integrated Instruction**

Students participate in a carefully designed sequence of integrated, rigorous instructional courses relevant to their pathway, including both academic and technical subjects.

* **Work-based Learning**

Students participate in structured work readiness activities and work-based learning experiences.

* **Credential Preparation**

The pathway enables students to make progress toward attainment of an industry-recognized credential or college credits toward a Certificate, Associates, or Baccalaureate degree.

* **Postsecondary Linkages**

Students participate in a wide range of college awareness and engagement activities to inform their postsecondary plan, relating to college, apprenticeship and/or training programs.

The evidence that will be sought from applicants about these six characteristics will be embedded in the five Guiding Principles, as shown below, so that the two are aligned and seamless.

**The Promise of Early College**

At first glance, the concept of early college is a simple one—a model that includes free standing schools as well as programs within a school, both of which accelerate pathway oriented, well supported college level course taking in high school. Through deep and strategic partnerships between high schools and institutions of higher education, early college programs enable high school students to earn a significant number of college credits on an intentional pathway in a rigorous, highly supportive environment. Early college allows high school students to take college credit bearing courses, as part of a holistic supportive model to ensure student success and seamless progression to higher education. This model offers sea change in the integration and alignment of high school with college.

While the structure demands significant investment in redesign and alignment, early college is a model that has delivered strong outcomes, creating opportunities for students to go farther and higher than before by helping them develop the courage and knowhow to think differently about their education; while it benefits *all* students, this model has proven to be especially powerful for first generation college students and low income students. For many, early college captures the promise of an early introduction to college course taking, and allows young people who may not have seen themselves going to college the opportunity to rethink what college means, to see themselves as college students, and to build a longer term vision for their career and their lives.

Like many innovations, early college has its roots in Massachusetts—the first known model of early college was developed by Elizabeth Blodgett Hall, who founded Simon’s Rock (later Bard College at Simon’s Rock) in Great Barrington, Massachusetts in 1966. In 1974, La Guardia Community College launched a “middle college high school” to serve at risk students. Both models influenced the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to launch the Early College High School Initiative in partnership with Massachusetts based nonprofit Jobs for the Future. From there, early college grew at larger scale within the public sphere. The learning from these many years of experience with early college models demonstrated that students who had traditionally experienced barriers to higher education were able to thrive in an early college environment.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Through the Gates initiative and many others throughout the country, early college has become one of the most successful ways to rethink high school, college, and the pathway through and to both, facilitating growth and development for tens of thousands of students.

This description of the impact of early college is not hyperbolic, but proven.[[3]](#footnote-3) In a national randomized control study by the American Institutes for Research, students who attended early college were 5% more likely to graduate from high school, 10% more likely to be enrolled in college within two years of their high school graduation, and 22% more likely to obtain an associate’s degree or greater within two years of their high school graduation.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Early college has demonstrated that when students are given the opportunity to work towards taking and completing college level coursework without regard to assumptions made based on their prior academic performance or their personal background, those students are often able to thrive and achieve academic success in an environment that supports them to surpass their previous achievement and attainment trajectories.

In order to accomplish this, in January 2017, the Boards of Elementary and Secondary Education and Higher Education jointly launched an Early College Initiative, intended to support the expansion of early college in Massachusetts and establish an Early College Program Designation. At that time, both boards jointly approved the five guiding principles for Early College Programs, based on findings in the research described above. The Boards also created an Early College Joint Committee, a five person joint committee of both boards, which includes the Chair of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Chair of the Board of Higher Education, one additional member from each board, and the Secretary of Education. The Commissioners of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Education (ECJC) serve as non-voting members of the committee as well. The ECJC was charged with developing this early college designation process for the Commonwealth and catalyzing the successful growth of high quality early college programs in Massachusetts. The ECJC will also issue final approval for all Massachusetts Early College program designations.

#

# Early College Planning Grant Purpose

The purpose of the grant is to provide resources to Early College program partner applicants who are planning to seek an Early College designation to enroll students in the Fall of 2020. The resources are intended to support both the secondary school partner and the institution of higher education (IHE) partner in their planning and ultimate completion of both Part A and Part B of the application process.

# Early College Planning Grant Eligibility and Funding

To qualify for competitive funding, applicants must plan to apply and complete the Planning Grant application by 5pm January 20, 2020.

Applicants should apply as already agreed-upon partners. This partnership should consist of a K-12/secondary school and an IHE. Though IHE’s may have more than one partnership with a secondary school, each unique partnership must apply separately. Additionally, local 2 year and 4 year IHE’s can partner together to support a K-12 program.

The planning grant will award between $10,000 and $30,000 in support of the Early College Designation application. Programs that are working on Part A of the application will be awarded $10,000 while programs working on Part B can be awarded up to $30,000.

Note: There is the expectation that $3,000 of the $10,000 initial award will be used for staff participation in the College and Career Advising (MyCAP) Professional Development Series in SY2019-20, provided that the school has not competed the series in the past.

The maximum award is up to $30,000.

# Primary Contact

Kristin Hunt, Early College Director, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, [Kristin.hunt@doe.mass.edu](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ccwilliams%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CDQSGJIVG%5CKristin.hunt%40doe.mass.edu); (781) 338-3110

#

# Planning Grant Evaluation

Applicants must complete the “Readiness Commitment Checklist” and then illustrate in their responses how planning grant funds from the state will help the applicants develop Early College programs that will meet all criteria requirements. Each item in the “Readiness Commitment Checklist” is closely tied to the five guiding principles that are essential to a successful High Quality College and Career Pathway.

Submissions will be screened for completeness, conformity to the program requirements, and timeliness of response. Submissions that are incomplete, non-conforming, or late may not be considered. Applications will be scored based on the quality of the applicants’ plans for the use of the requested funds to support the pathway in meeting criteria for Designation. *Preference may be given to applicants who not received Early College Planning Grant funds in the past.*

# Copy of the Planning Grant Application

1. **Partner Information**

|  |
| --- |
| **K-12 Partner Contact Information** |
| District Name |
| High School |
| K-12 Contact Person Name |
| K-12 Contact Person - Title (e.g., Principal, Head of School, Executive Director |
| K-12 Contact Person - E-mail |
| K-12 Contact Person - Phone Number |

|  |
| --- |
| **Institution of Higher Education Partner Contact Information** |
| Institution of Higher Education |
| IHE Contact Person Name |
| IHE Contact Person - Title |
| IHE Contact Person - E-mail |
| IHE Contact Person - Phone Number |

**Please identify which partner will be the fiscal sponsor (grant recipient) if you are awarded this grant.**

For the institution of higher education: Do you currently have other designated Early College programs?  Is this designation application to start a new Early College program or to qualify a current non-designated early college/dual enrollment program for designation status? **Field limited to 250 words.**

|  |
| --- |
| Does the secondary institution currently receive Perkins funding? ( ) Yes( ) No |
| Has the secondary institution already participated in the College and Career Advising (MyCAP) Professional Development Series, sponsored by DESE, in partnership with MASCA (Massachusetts School Counselor Association)? ( ) Yes( ) No |
| If the secondary institution has NOT already participated in the College and Career Advising (MyCAP) Professional Development Series, does the applicant agree to participate in the series in SY2019-20? (As noted above, $3000 from the planning grant will be used to pay for staff workshop participation.)( ) Check box to indicate agreement to participate |

1. **Early College Readiness Commitment Checklist**

This checklist is designed to help prospective Early College applicants self-assess and identify gaps or challenges to developing and implementing a program that will meet the Early College Designation Criteria. Fulfilling the commitments outlined on this checklist will prepare applicants for the Part A Application.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| Are both partners committed to providing an Early College program free to students and their families? **Guiding Principle 1** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Are both partners committed to creating an admissions process to the Early College program that promotes equitable access to all students, particularly students underserved in higher education? Are both partners committed to creating particular strategies for supporting Black and Latinx students? **Guiding Principle 1** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Are both partners committed to consulting with families and students to determine interest in the proposed program? **Guiding Principle 1** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Does the secondary institution already use an online platform such as Naviance or MEFA Pathways that is integrated into the advising program at the school? (Aligned career and college counseling is a required piece of the Early College designation, including the guided use of MyCAP beginning in 9th grade.) **Guiding Principle 2** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Are both partners committed to designing schedules that allow for participation in college-credited courses without students having to miss high school class time or other HW related activities? **Guiding Principle 2** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Are both partners committed to convening faculty for guided conversations regarding curriculum alignment? **Guiding Principle 2** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Are the partners committed to developing a preliminary plan for wrap around supports for Early College students? **Guiding Principle 3** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Are the partners committed to exposing students to a variety of career pathways (i.e. internships, capstones, etc.)? **Guiding Principle 4** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Are the partners committed to providing designated staff for the Early College Program? **Guiding Principle 5** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Is the IHE committed to providing physical space on campus to accommodate Early College students? **Guiding Principle 5** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Are both partners committed to the creation of a transportation plan for Early College students to attend events, advising, and college coursework at the IHE? **Guiding Principle 5** | [ ]  | [ ]  |
| Have both partners committed to holding conversations with their collective bargaining representatives regarding Early College plans? **Guiding Principle 5** | [ ]  | [ ]  |

1. **Grant Application Narrative**

|  |
| --- |
| Please describe your interest and motivation in receiving an Early College designation**. Field limited to 1,000 words.\*** |
| Having completed the “Early College Readiness Commitment Checklist”, what do you anticipate will be the greatest challenges to meeting the criteria for the Early College Part A Application? Please describe each challenge and primary consideration for solutions. **Field limited to 1,000 words.**  |
| Applicants are required to submit a completed template budget for this competitive planning grant funding. Please describe how these funds will be used, and how they will support both partners in meeting the Early College designation criteria. **Field limited to 1,000 words.**  |

1. **Upload Template Budget for Competitive Planning Grant Funding**

Copy and paste this template budget into a separate Word Document. Then, complete the template to demonstrate how the Planning Grant Funding will be used to support both partners in meeting the Early College designation Criteria. Applicants will be asked to upload this completed document directly onto [the survey](https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5071634/Early-College-Planning-Grant).

|  |
| --- |
| **Applicant Name:**  |
| **A. Salaries and Benefits** | **Rate $ per Hour** | **# of Hours** | **Total** |
| Administrator |   |   |   |
| Project Coordinator |   |   |   |
| High School Teacher Stipends |   |   |   |
| Post-Secondary Faculty Stipends |   |   |   |
| Support Staff |   |   |   |
| Fringe Benefits |   |   |   |
| **Total Salaries and Benefits** |  |  |  **$ -**  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **B. Contractual Services** | **Rate $ per Hour** | **# of Hours** | **Total** |
| describe |   |   |   |
| describe |   |   |   |
| describe |   |   |   |
| **Total Contractual Services** |  |  |  **$ -**  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **C. Other\*** |  |  | **Total** |
| Participation in College and Career Advising (MyCAP) Professional Development Series, if the secondary institution has not yet participated. (Applicant must allot $3,000 here.) |   |   |   |
| Instructional Related Supplies and Materials |   |   |   |
| Travel |   |   |   |
| Other Supplies and Materials |   |   |   |
| describe |   |   |   |
| describe |   |   |   |
| **Other Total** |  |  |  **$ -**  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Grant Request Sub Total (Section A + B + C)** |  |  |  **$ -**  |
| Indirect Costs (10% Maximum) |   |   |   |
| **Grant Request Total (Not to exceed $30,000)** |  |  |  **$ -**  |
|  |  |  |
| **Signature of Fiscal Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****Signature of Corresponding Partner: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** |
|  |  |

\*Please note equipment (inclusive of computer hardware, e.g. laptops) and student stipends may not be funded by this planning grant.

1. To learn more about the EC model, refer to the EC [summary](http://www.mass.edu/strategic/ec_home.asp) and [designation criteria](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/resources/EarlyCollegeCriteria.docx). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. American Institutes for Research, *Early College, Continued Success: Early College High School Initiative Impact Study*, January 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Early college students are far more likely to earn a college degree by high school graduation—30% of early college students earn an Associate’s degree vs. very few students nationally. Early college students are also more likely to earn substantial college credit in high school (94% v. 10% nationally). These students are more likely to enroll in college immediately after high school (71% vs. 54%), and return to college for a second year (86% v. 72%). Jobs for the Future, *Early College Expansion: Propelling Students to Postsecondary Success at a School Near You, Executive Summary*, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. American Institutes for Research, *Early College, Continued Success: Early College High School Initiative Impact Study*, January 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)