SECTION 2: EMC Application and Operational Processes

EMC Application Process

Districts interested in opening a new EMC must attend the Opening an EMC Workshop and an Application Support Workshop to learn about the EMC application process, EMC philosophy, and design principles. At least one person from the district who is involved in submitting the EMC application and one representative from postsecondary are required to attend the Opening and EMC Workshop. Districts are encouraged to send an EMC team made up of the superintendent, principal, counselor, teacher(s), postsecondary partner staff, and early college coordinator.

Local education agencies (LEAs), both traditional public-school districts and public-school academies (PSAs) that apply for approval of an EMC, must provide the department with the following:

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The MOU is the written agreement between the EMC and the postsecondary partner that outlines the mutually accepted expectations of the parties. The MOU may address program design, course sequence and offerings, admission procedures, tuition and fees, books and supplemental materials, student support, code of conduct, and responsibilities of staff. The EMC and postsecondary partner will develop an MOU together to submit with the application. Guidance on creating an MOU and an MOU Sample are available on the Early Middle College website. It is recommended that EMCs and postsecondary partners review the MOU frequently, at a minimum, yearly.

An MOU must include:

- EMC signature and date
- Postsecondary partner signature and date
- Timeframe for the agreement
- Financial and operational responsibilities
- Reporting requirements in the Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL) and Student Transcript and Academic Record Repository (STARR)
- Additional items necessary for the partnership

A separate MOU must be uploaded for each postsecondary partner as individual documents

Five-Year Program of Study (POS)

Every EMC must have at least one program of study but is encouraged to develop multiple programs of study with multiple postsecondary partners if available. The postsecondary partner should help the school consider available degrees, the timing and sequence of courses for EMC students, delivery methods of courses, transferability of credit, and costs to students/families.

The college partner and the EMC staff should develop the POS together as a joint document. The high school will ensure that all high school graduation requirements are included, and the postsecondary partner will plan the college coursework.

A POS must include:

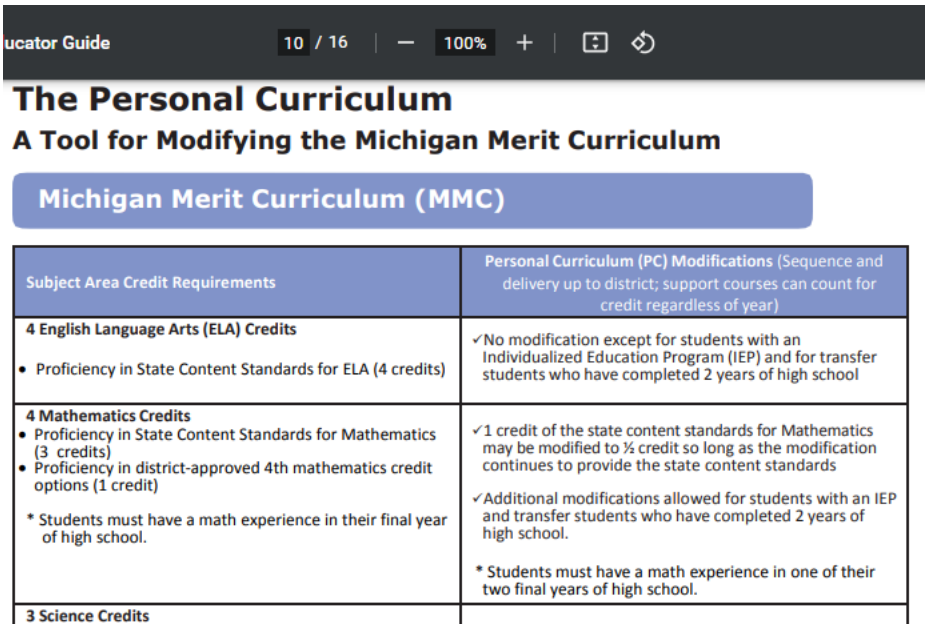
- EMC name
- College name
- EMC Outcome (associate degree, professional certificate, participation in a registered apprenticeship, or 60 transferable college credits)
- Total number of college credits the student could earn
- Math or math-related course the student will take during the fifth year as a condition of the Michigan Merit Curriculum to be eligible for high school graduation
- Courses that will be taken for high school credit during each count period of the fifth year as a condition of Pupil Accounting requirements (this can be the math/math-related course, high school courses, or college courses)
- High school course names and college course names for grades 9 through 13

Final Year Math and Pupil Membership

MDE has provided guidance documents for EMC Pupil Membership and MMC requirements. Please review the EMC Student 5th Year EMC Pupil Membership Requirements for additional information on meeting both pupil membership and MMC for fifth-year EMC students.

Exceptions to the final year math requirement are available for students with a personal curriculum. The exception allows for a slightly different requirement for the final math-related course/experience, which is that the student must be enrolled in a math experience in one of their two final years of high school. If the student had a math-related experience the last year, they fulfilled the requirement. It is important to ensure that the student has a course during each semester that generates high school credit. The high school credit will be generated by the student's postsecondary courses during the final year.

See [Personal Curriculum: Parent and Educator Guide] (Screenshot below)



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The Personal Curriculum

A Tool for Modifying the Michigan Merit Curriculum

Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)

Subject Area Credit Requirements	Personal Curriculum (PC) Modifications (Sequence and delivery up to district; support courses can count for credit regardless of year)
4 English Language Arts (ELA) Credits • Proficiency in State Content Standards for ELA (4 credits)	✓No modification except for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and for transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school
4 Mathematics Credits • Proficiency in State Content Standards for Mathematics (3 credits) • Proficiency in district-approved 4th mathematics credit options (1 credit) * Students must have a math experience in their final year of high school.	✓1 credit of the state content standards for Mathematics may be modified to ½ credit so long as the modification continues to provide the state content standards ✓Additional modifications allowed for students with an IEP and transfer students who have completed 2 years of high school. * Students must have a math experience in one of their two final years of high school.
3 Science Credits	

The 3500 code, marked for EMC students in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS), moves the student into a five-year graduation cohort. Therefore, to meet the math requirements of MMC, a student is not eligible to graduate if a math or math-related course has not been taken in the final year of high school. For EMC students, coded 3500, the final year of high school is year five. There is no need to "hold back" any other course unless the district determines that it is in the student's best interest. The course(s) designated are a district decision. For additional information, please see the [EMC Student Fifth Year Frequently Asked Questions Tip Sheet]

Board of Education Minutes

Board Minutes must include:

- Approval of the 5-year POS as a requirement for high school graduation.
- The date the Board meeting was or will be held.
- Approval of the minutes from the meeting where the EMC was adopted. If the EMC is a Consortium, minutes from each local district should also be submitted.
- Note: MDE recommends the following language be included in the statement for Board approval: "This Board approves a 5-year EMC POS that requires enrollment in a math or math-related course in the fifth year for EMC students."

Organizational Chart

The organizational chart is a visual representation of all the secondary and postsecondary staff that are involved in running and supporting the EMC.

An Organizational Chart must include:

- The secondary roles supporting the EMC
- The postsecondary roles supporting the EMC
- The reporting structures
- The percentage of full-time equivalency (FTE) dedicated to the EMC for each position
- The governance (Board oversight) structure for the EMC

Note: The organization chart should be a graphical display.

Focus Areas

EMCs are asked to designate focus areas in the Education Entity Master (EEM) relevant to the programs of study offered. Currently, MDE has not been able to edit the focus areas listed to make the options more comprehensive. This is planned for the new version of the EEM in development. Until that time, the EMC focus areas include:

- Arts and Communications
- Business Management, Marketing, and Technology
- CTE
- Engineering, Manufacturing, and Industrial Technology
- Health Sciences
- Human Services
- Natural Resources and Agriscience
- Associate of Arts
- Associate of Science

Role of the EMC Coordinator

EMC coordinators manage the day-to-day responsibilities of an EMC. The coordinator provides student instructional and school support.

It is vital that the EMC coordinator works with their local district EEM authorized user(s) to keep contact information current in the EEM to ensure accurate access to information. MDE will communicate with the individuals listed in the EEM as the designated EMC coordinator. More than one EMC coordinator can be listed. The role of the EMC coordinator includes:

Collaboration and Coordination

- Act as a liaison between the EMC and MDE. If serving as an EMC consortium coordinator, act as a liaison between the local districts, the EMC, and MDE.
- Meet with counselors on a regular basis to discuss student scheduling, student needs, successes, and outcomes. Counselors are important in helping to identify students who may benefit from an EMC program, providing scheduling support for courses, and contributing to the EMC wrap- around support services.

- Work in collaboration with member districts and postsecondary partners during the MDE annual verification process to ensure all contact information and school building codes are verified and updated in the EEM by the date requested.
- Actively recruit students and enroll them in career and college readiness courses and activities.
- Respond in a timely manner to MDE and the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) correspondence.
- Collaborate with postsecondary partners to develop five-year programs of study.
- Assist the postsecondary partner(s) to ensure EMC students are supported through the graduation audit and graduation application process.

EMC Student Support

- Meet with postsecondary partners often for instructional opportunities critical to an EMC student's academic growth and development. Postsecondary partners provide administrative assistance by developing MOUs, establishing POS, and providing opportunities for student support and engagement. Further student support services provided by EMCs can include mandatory orientation, tutoring, required academic advising appointments, transportation for EMC students, and much more.
- Provide opportunities for students to visit or take courses on a college campus.
- Ensure an alert system is being used by the secondary and postsecondary partners to assist students struggling with attendance, academics, or personal issues.
- Ensure students/parents/guardians understand the five-year POS and are informed of EMC and postsecondary policies, schedules, and requirements.

Data Management and Student Reporting

- Ensure participating/local districts are aware of the coding requirements. It is the district's responsibility to properly code the EMC student 3500 in the MSDS at each collection. Districts will not be allowed to code a student after the fall general collection certification deadline. (See 'Coding Appeals' in Section 3).
- Ensure districts with a CTE EMC program report in the correct PSN and report accurately in the Career and Technical Education Information System (CTEIS), MSDS, and TSDL.
- Share student core information as reported by the high school with the college partner. Information should include Unique Identifier Code (UIC), name as reported by the high school, date of birth, etc.
- Participate in the EMC Update Sessions and ensure local districts have the information to participate in the sessions.

- Collect, review, and utilize data to make informed decisions for EMC programming.

Leadership, Technical Assistance, and Professional Development

- Develop the EMC POS and plan the schedule for CTE (if applicable) and college coursework.
- Review the EMC finances, develop partnerships with postsecondary partners, and work to develop MOUs.
- Shape a communication plan for the EMC, including students, families, district staff, and the postsecondary partner(s).
- Lead by example by attending MDE and MEMCA EMC professional development. Encourage local district staff and postsecondary partners to attend professional development training opportunities.
- Encourage secondary and postsecondary instructors to meet and work collaboratively to align the curriculum.

Program Quality

- Work with district staff to provide a quality EMC program.
- Use the High Quality EMC Framework to conduct EMC self-assessments to determine gaps in services or outcomes.
- Evaluate data as a pattern of irregularities in data coding, submission, and/or data omission, as it may result in the EMC being placed on probation or closed.
- Maintain a copy of all local district Board minutes. The minutes should document approval of the five-year POS as a requirement for high school graduation, which includes a math or math-related course, which must be taken in the fifth year to meet the MMC requirements, and a course for high school credit in each count period of the fifth year.
- Maintain the following documentation on file for each EMC student to be prepared for a successful Pupil Accounting Audit:
  - An annually updated educational development plan (EDP) clearly showing EMC participation.
  - The student's schedule that matches the five-year POS.
  - A Program of Study.
  - Evidence of the degree/credential obtained by the student, i.e., a copy of the college transcript showing attainment of an associate degree, MEMCA Technical Certificate, etc.

Role of the EMC Postsecondary Partners

Colleges and universities are important partners for EMC programs and provide the connection to postsecondary coursework. EMCs must have a primary postsecondary partner and may have additional partners.

MDE will send communications and EMC updates to individuals listed in the EEM as the EMC Postsecondary Partner Contact. The Postsecondary Partner Contact is the person from the college or university that the EMC staff work with. If the EMC has multiple postsecondary partners, each partner should have a contact person listed in the EEM, and the contact information should be kept current in the EEM. A list of colleges and universities that currently partner with EMCs are listed on the MDE EMC website.

Postsecondary institutions can build strong relationships with EMCs through the following actions.

Collaboration

- Become members of the Michigan Early Middle College Association (MEMCA).
- Join the MEMCA Higher Education Liaison EMC Network (HELEN). Contact Angie Bess at bessa@kellogg.edu for more information.
- Collaborate with EMCs to discuss community service opportunities for students on campus.
- Serve on an EMC Regional Advisory Team. Regional Advisory Teams are often established by groups of EMCs working collaboratively to share resources and provide one another with support. Contact MDE EMC Unit for connections with various Early Middle College Regional Advisory Teams.
- Connect with secondary staff to automatically add CTE credits to EMC student transcripts when they apply for admission.
- Develop postsecondary succession planning to ensure EMC continuity when staffing changes occur.
- Support EMCs in managing the various requirements of multiple postsecondary partners. The timing of courses and varied deadlines for registration, drop/add, graduation audits, etc. can be very different making managing these dates difficult.
- Establish additional opportunities for student credit, including Statewide Postsecondary Credit Agreements/Articulation Agreements.
- Communicate relevant information related to the college with EMC staff and other partner organizations.
- Work to add EMC and other College in High School Opportunities to the college's strategic plan.
- Involve EMCs when colleges are planning major changes, especially related to academic programs. Major changes can have lasting impact on Program of Study.
- Assist the EMC Coordinator and staff to ensure EMC students are supported through the graduation audit and graduation application process.
- Implement priority registration for EMC students, if possible. This allows EMC students to work around high school course times and other K-12 commitments such as athletics and extracurricular activities.

- Develop a system to send college transcripts to the EMC at the end of each term.

Student Support

- Consider opportunities to expand equity and access for EMC students.
- Collaborate with EMC partners to discuss the need and support for an EMC bootcamp focused on college processes and procedures.
- Explore the possibility of providing scholarships for EMC students continuing at the college/university.
- Discuss options for the successful transfer of EMC students.
- Develop a student success course with a focus on EMC students.
- Support 13th-year EMC students in the continuation of higher education goals, including college applications, scholarship submissions, and more.
- Plan support services for EMC students.
- Program recruitment outreach with the EMC staff to promote the EMC opportunity, including visiting classrooms, developing a video, and more.
- Reach out to EMC students just shy of a credential (associate's) to personalize experience once transferred. Often, only 2-3 classes are needed.
- Include EMC Coordinators on Early Alerts for EMC students.
- Work with the EMC to identify which course formats (virtual, in-person, hybrid) and course lengths of time (15-week, 12-week, etc.) are better for EMC students.
- Evaluate placement testing requirements to identify what is necessary to place students into the courses while still considering the literature on placement best practices and student success.
- Communicate with EMC students using technology tools at the college/university, such as Customer Relationship Management, Student Information Systems, etc.

Reporting

- Schedule periodic meetings with EMC partners to review STARR and TSDL data.
- Communicate the difference between EMC and dual-enrolled students with the Institutional Research and Registrar's Office for accuracy in reporting.
- Confirm with the EMC which program or courses the student is participating in, EMC or dual enrollment. EMC students could participate in both.
- Attend MDE and MECMA EMC professional development.

Colleges and universities looking for details on existing EMCs can visit MI School Data. For additional information, please review the Early Middle College and Postsecondary Partnerships At-A-Glance Document and EMC Postsecondary Manual.

Adding a Postsecondary Partner

EMCs are welcome to add additional postsecondary partners. To add an additional partner, the EMC should send a copy of the signed MOU and the POS between the EMC and the new postsecondary partner to MDE

EMC Funding

Regular EMCs do not receive any additional funding other than the FTE for 13th-year students. To receive the full FTE, students must have a schedule of courses that is considered full-time. Contact the ISD Pupil Accounting Auditor for more information.

CTE EMCs may also be eligible for State School Aid Section 61b funding. See Section 6.

EMC Naming

EMCs are approved by MDE and listed under a school district entity in the Education Entity Master (EEM). While there is no requirement for naming, for consistency, MDE recommends naming the EMC after the school district and then adding Early Middle College to the name. The district must not be referred to as an Early College unless the EMC has received approval from MDE.

Tuition and Fees

Dual Enrollment

http://www.michigan.gov/dualenrollmentDistricts/EMC Consortia are required to pay the tuition and mandatory course fees, material fees, and registration fees required for dual enrollment in an eligible course unless the costs exceed the prorated percentage of the statewide weighted average foundation allowance. After this amount is exhausted, the district has the option of paying the additional costs using local funding sources, or the parent/guardian must pay the remaining costs. The district will provide each student an eligibility letter detailing eligible charges paid by the district. For the most recent information on dual enrollment costs, please see the MDE's dual enrollment FAQs and dual enrollment calculation worksheet at the MDE Dual Enrollment webpage.

Repayment

If a student does not receive credit for a course, the student is required to repay the school district.

Exceptions to repayment:

- A student who does not complete a course due to a family or medical emergency [MCL 388.514(9)(b)].
- A serious illness, disability, or injury of a family member.

- The death of a parent, guardian, or other close family member.
- Financial hardship, such as loss of employment or unexpected medical expenses.
- The need for the student to care for an ill or disabled family member.
- Domestic violence or other situations affecting family safety.
- Homelessness or the loss of stable housing.
- Military deployment of a parent or guardian.

For more information, please review the frequently asked questions, as well as the related laws, at the MDE Dual Enrollment webpage.

EMC
EMCs are designed with the intent of providing additional access to postsecondary courses and additional student supports. The maximum number of courses, as well as the handling of costs more than the student's foundation, should be detailed in the MOU between the secondary school and postsecondary institution. MDE does not impose a cap on the number of courses/credits allowed for Early Middle College students. Any limitations should be addressed at the local level inside the MOU. It is recommended that any costs families may incur should be explained prior to a student enrolling as an EMC student.

If the student is paying for a class, most likely, the district does not qualify for state aid for that class. Contact the ISD Pupil Accounting auditor for more information.

Remedial Coursework

It is possible for an EMC student to take developmental college courses due to scheduling and/or school/program location limitations as long as the district's local funding sources pay for the associated costs. Section 5GA(B) of the Pupil Accounting Manual gives the district the option of paying for remedial courses if it is in the best educational interest of the student.

EMC Document Retention

The Records Retention and Disposal Schedule for Michigan Public Schools and the individual pupil-level requirements in Section 1 of the Pupil Accounting Manual should be followed by all school districts. A student's high school/college transcript should be a part of the student's permanent file.

Section 5GB of the Pupil Accounting Manual lists the documents that EMCs and local districts must retain for EMC students. EMCs should retain the documentation for **three** years after the student graduates. An electronic copy of the student file is acceptable.

Changing EMC Entity Types

If an EMC decides to change the entity type from an EMC school to a program or a program to a school, an email must be sent to the EMC manager to request the *Early Middle College Change Request Form School Entity to Program* or *Program to School Entity*. See Section 8 for contact information. The district needs to fill out the name of the district, the superintendent, and the EMC contact information. The entity code must be submitted, and the form must be dated and signed by the superintendent and all district members. The form must be then returned to the EMC manager by the due date.

Out-of-State Postsecondary Partners

EMCs can have out-of-state postsecondary partners if the institution is located within 20 miles of a border with the state and chooses to comply with the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act.

EMC Closure

MDE reserves the right to place EMCs on probation or close them altogether for failing to meet student reporting requirements.

EMCs can also request to close. Ideally, the EMC will have worked with MDE for support to address any issues that may have allowed them to remain open prior to requesting closure. All enrolled EMC students must be allowed to graduate. The EMC can choose not to enroll any new EMC students, and staff can make a note that the EMC will be closing along with the effective school year. If the EMC does not have students who need to finish the EMC program, an authorized user at the secondary school may complete and submit a Notice of Early College Closure Form. EMCs should contact the EMC manager for the closure form.

Reinstatement of EMC Closed By MDE

Reinstatement for EMCs closed by MDE may be requested by the district. MDE staff will send a letter formally accepting the reinstatement request and detailing the requirements of the process. During this process, districts must demonstrate a commitment to providing students with dual enrollment, provide evidence of an annual review of student educational development plans (EDP), explain the social and emotional wrap-around services, and address successful postsecondary transition. The reinstatement process shall be a minimum of two (2) consecutive years. If the district successfully completes the two-year reinstatement process, the district will be eligible to go through the EMC application approval process.

To successfully complete the reinstatement process, the district must have two consecutive school years of clean auditing of student data and reporting. An annual submission of forms detailing the school's progress must be submitted both years.

There are three forms that complete the annual submission. The first form requests dual enrollment student data. The second form requests a detailed account of wrap-around services for dual-enrolled students. The third form requests a narrative describing the advancements made toward the district's ability to operate an EMC with integrity and fidelity. Once the two years of auditing are complete, the district must attend MDE's Opening an EMC Workshop, Application Support Workshop, and submit a New EMC Application. The district's data entry staff must participate in MDE's EMC Update virtual meetings beginning in the winter in which they submit the application. Once approved, the EMC will reopen the following school year. The entire class of EMC students will be audited as at-risk students for the first two years of the EMC being opened. After two years of operation, the EMC will be audited, and the reinstatement process will be complete.