Early Middle College Postsecondary Manual

2025-2026 Edition

Michigan Department of Education
Office of Career and Technical Education

Mission: To prepare students with the academics, credentials, and work behavior skills needed to thrive in education and careers.

MICHIGAN
EARLY MIDDLE COLLEGES

Acronyms and Abbreviations

The following is a list of acronyms and abbreviations commonly used throughout Early Middle College (EMC).

3500	EMC code that designates to the State that a student is an EMC participant
CEPI	Center for Educational Performance and Information
CTE	Career and Technical Education
DE	Dual Enrollment
EDP	Educational Development Plan
EEM	Education Entity Master
EMC	Early Middle College
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
HELEN	Higher Education Liaison Early Middle College Network
IEP	Individualized Education Program
ISD	Intermediate School District
LEA	Local Educational Agencies
MCAN	Michigan College Access Network
MCNC	Middle College National Consortium
MDE	Michigan Department of Education
MDE–OCTE	The Michigan Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education
MEMCA	Michigan Early Middle College Association
MICEC	Michigan Career Education Conference
MMC	Michigan Merit Curriculum
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSDS	Michigan School Data System
NACEP	National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships
POS	Programs of Study
PSA	Public School Academy
SIS	Student Information System
STARR	Student Transcript and Academic Record Repository
TSDL	Teacher Student Data Link
UIC	Unique Identification Code

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SECTION 1: EMC History and Information

Introduction

College in high school programming has seen increased interest from stakeholders across Michigan, and the state has seen incredible growth in the number of districts and public-school academies that have selected to seek approval to open an Early Middle College (EMC). At the beginning of the 2024-25 school year, there were 190 EMCs in partnership with 43 colleges and universities.

The Michigan Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education (MDE-OCTE) oversees the Early Middle College programming in Michigan and provides support to secondary and postsecondary institutions that currently operate or are interested in opening an EMC. Because strong partnerships lead to successful student outcomes, the MDE-OCTE EMC Unit has developed this postsecondary manual to support the colleges and universities that partner with EMCs across Michigan.

History of Michigan Early Middle Colleges

Traditionally, throughout the nation, Early Colleges or Middle Colleges were high schools where 100% of the students were working toward a high school diploma and postsecondary credit. Early Colleges were geared toward advanced students, who had the opportunity to graduate in four years with a high school diploma and postsecondary credit or an associate degree. Middle Colleges were for students behind on high school credit and needing additional social/emotional support.

Michigan's approach to Early Middle Colleges was to blend the approach of Early Colleges with the philosophy of Middle Colleges. In Michigan, EMCs are encouraged to support first-generation, underrepresented, underserved, underperforming, and at-risk students, but each school can determine the focus and acceptance requirements of the EMC. Michigan has also opted to alter the traditional EMC model by allowing districts to provide a five-year program of study and choose to set up the EMC as a high school where all students participate in the EMC, a program where a subset of students within a high school participate in the EMC, or a consortium where students from multiple districts participate in the EMC.

In 1991, the first Middle College was opened in Michigan by Dr. Chery Wagonlander and titled Mott Middle College on the campus of Mott Community College. The establishment of Mott Middle College was supported by the Middle College National Consortium. Dr. Wagonlander also served as the Executive Director of the Michigan Early Middle College Association (MEMCA) from 2005 through 2021.

The Michigan approach to Early Middle Colleges changed with the passage of the Postsecondary Options Act of 1996, PA 160, in 1996 and the Career and Technical Preparation Act, PA 258, in 2000. The legislation resulted in the following:

- An increased number of college courses that EMC students could take while in high school.
- The identification of EMCs as unique five-year models.
- The permission for districts to choose between a high school EMC entity or a program serving a cohort of students. In 2020, MDE-OCTE made a third category for consortia EMCs.
- The permission for districts to collect foundation allowances for 5th-year EMC students.
- The tracking of EMC students by flagging them in the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) System.
- The securing of a waiver from the United States Education Department (USED) to allow EMC students to be considered on time graduates after five years for Adequate Year Progress (AYP) reporting.
- The authorization of the MEMCA Certificate.
- The permission for sites other than the high school to be eligible as locations for earning concurrent credit.
- The encouragement to districts to exercise school of choice options, allowing the release of a student from one school to another, including the entry into an EMC.

How do Colleges and Universities Get Involved with EMCs?

A school district can partner with community colleges, public universities, or private universities in Michigan. 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. A college or university may not apply for an EMC. EMCs must be started at the secondary level by a school district, an Intermediate School District (ISD), or a public school academy. However, the postsecondary partner plays an important role in the planning and support of the EMC.

Benefits of EMC to the Postsecondary Partner

Exposing high school students to college prior to graduation has been shown to have a positive impact on college matriculation. Students are more likely to enroll in college after completing a fifth year of high school through an EMC. Based on survey data from a 2015 study conducted by the Center for Michigan Early & Middle College Partnerships (CMEMCP) and the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools & Teaching (NCREST), **86% of EMC students filled out college applications** while enrolled in an EMC program. **53% of EMC students** aspired to attend college and **continue to earn a graduate degree** after completing an EMC program. **95% of the EMC students surveyed felt ready to**

handle college classes, and this success is demonstrated by the fact that the **average college GPA for the students was a 3.10** out of 4.0.[1]

More recent data demonstrate EMC's success in the postsecondary arena. **65.47% of EMC students** in Michigan **enrolled in college within 12 months** of graduating high school during the 2021-22 academic year, compared to only **58.31% of non-EMC students:** a 7.16% difference. Additionally, **30.42% of EMC students** in Michigan who graduated from high school during the 2018-19 school year earned a **bachelor's degree** within four years of graduating from high school, compared to only **17.12% of non-EMC students**. This is a 13.3% difference between EMC students and non-EMC students. On average, EMC students earn **51.6 college credits by the end of the 13th year**. Only 37% of non-EMC high school graduates in Michigan earn 24 college credits within 12 months ***after*** graduation.[2]

The EMC model also benefits at-risk students in Michigan. For the 2022-23 school year, **7.05% of EMC students who were Economically Disadvantaged** earned an associate degree as their EMC outcome. However, only **0.27% of all 2021-22 Michigan High School graduates who were Economically Disadvantaged** earned an associate degree during the 2022-23 academic year. A similar trend is applicable for Students with Disabilities. For the 2022-23 school year, about **1.7% of EMC Students with Disabilities** earned an associate degree as their EMC outcome. However, only **0.06% of all Students with Disabilities** who graduate from high school during the 2021-22 academic year earned an associate degree during the 2022-23 academic year. Lastly, **3.4% of EMC students who were English Learners (ELs)** earned an associate degree as their EMC outcome for the 2022-23 school year. However, only **0.14% of all ELs who graduated high school** in 2021-22 earned an associate degree in the 2022-23 school year.[3]

Students with an early college experience have already learned how to navigate postsecondary environments. In addition, EMC students have already experienced the demands of postsecondary coursework. These experiences mean the EMC students are already more prepared and generally have less reliance on university faculty and staff.

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[1] The Center for Michigan Early & Middle College Partnerships, *Michigan's Early and Middle Colleges: Innovations and Outcomes* (New York City: New York, National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools & Teaching, 2015), https://www.memca-michigan.org/_files/ugd/814a8a_ba0b267823b241a5808ceef664ff72eb.pdf.

[2] MI School Data, "College Opportunities for High School Students," accessed January 24, 2025, https://www.mischooldata.org/dual-enrollment/.

[3] MI School Data, "Early Middle College Enrollment and Outcomes," accessed March 18, 2025, https://www.mischooldata.org/emc-enrollment-and-outcomes/; MI School Data, "College Progression by Graduating Class," accessed March 18, 2025, https://www.mischooldata.org/college-progression-by-graduating-class/.

EMC Philosophy and Populations Served

The philosophy is that an EMC experience can benefit all students. MDE-OCTE's philosophy is that the students who can most benefit from an EMC experience are students who are:

- Economically Disadvantaged
- Underrepresented
- Underserved
- Underperforming

The philosophy and populations served are not a requirement of EMCs in Michigan. The guidance is that the above student demographics could benefit most from the support structures, teaching philosophy, and unique environment provided by an EMC.

EMC Definition and Student Outcomes

Each EMC has a five-year program of study that is approved by the Michigan Department of Education. Students and parents/guardians must be made aware of the five-year commitment to an EMC. The EMC will provide a unique cohort environment for students to develop and integrate a 'career and college readiness' curriculum, and provide guidance and counseling specifically designed to support EMC students. The EMC may begin as early as grade 9 and is designed to allow a pupil to earn a high school diploma while also earning one or more of the following:

1. Associate degree
2. 60 transferable college credits
3. A professional certification
4. Michigan Early Middle College Association (MEMCA) technical certificate
5. Participation in a registered apprenticeship

A professional certification is any certificate or industry-recognized credential in which the pupil prepared for by taking coursework provided by a Michigan public or private college or university.

EMCs must have a formal agreement with at least one Michigan public or private college or university and maintain formal agreements with all postsecondary partners.

EMC Entity Types

Early Middle College **High School** is a stand-alone public high school, where 100% of the pupils are enrolled as EMC pupils.

Early Middle College **Program** is a high school program designed to serve less than 100% of the high school population.

Early Middle College **Consortium** is comprised of multiple school districts with one coordinating agency.

3500 Code

Early Middle College students are identified in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) by a code of 3500. A student can be coded 3500 as soon as the student and parent/guardian commit to the fifth year. The 3500 code can be entered as early as grade 9, and each EMC student must be coded 3500 in the MSDS by the fall certification deadline of the student's junior year (grade 11 of high school).

EMC and Career-Centered Programming

There are EMCs throughout the state that offer career and technical education (CTE) programs of study for students. CTE EMCs can offer CTE courses through a high school or a career center, and the CTE program must be state-approved to be included in an EMC. These programs of study must also have secondary/ postsecondary alignment and lead to the completion of one of the EMC outcomes: associate degree, 60 transferable college credits, professional certificate, MEMCA technical certificate, or participation in a registered apprenticeship.

High-Quality EMC Program

MDE-OCTE has defined a high-quality EMC program as follows:

- Academic programming with career and college readiness curriculum embedded.
- A student-centered philosophy providing social emotional, and wraparound support by secondary and postsecondary.
- A culture of continuous improvement and data-driven decision making.
- Robust, active partnerships between secondary and postsecondary.
- Organizational leadership support that provides dedicated EMC staff, resources, and professional development dedicated to supporting EMC students/families.
- Access and equity for all students.
- A comprehensive early middle college program of study for each student.
- Timeliness, accuracy, and fidelity in student reporting.
- Students exit with at least one of the five on-track EMC graduate outcomes.
- A career and college readiness culture throughout the school.

The High-Quality EMC Program Alignment with the Four Pillars of an Early Middle College is as follows:

High Quality Components	College-focused academic program	Student academic and social/ emotional support	High school-college collaboration	Culture of continuous improvement
1. Academic programming with career and college readiness curriculum embedded.	X	X	X	
2. A student-centered philosophy providing social emotional, and wraparound support by secondary and postsecondary.		X	X	
3. A culture of continuous improvement and data-driven decision making.			X	X
4. Robust, active partnerships between secondary and postsecondary.	X	X	X	X
5. Organizational leadership support that provides dedicated EMC staff, resources, and professional development dedicated to supporting EMC students/families.	X	X	X	X
6. Access and equity for all students.		X	X	X
7. A comprehensive EMC program of study for each student.	X	X	X	X
8. Timeliness, accuracy, and fidelity in student reporting.			X	X
9. Students exit with at least one of the five on-track EMC graduate outcomes.	X		X	X
10. A career and college readiness culture throughout the school.	X		X	X

EMC Design Principles, Beliefs, and Best Practices

POWER OF THE SITE
Locating the school on a college campus is integral to student motivation and success, and an enduring collaborative partnership. It is a visible symbol to the community of dual accountability for student outcomes and academic success. Students are treated as college students and see themselves as college completers.

TEACHING & LEARNING
Developing students' literacy skills is critical to academic success. Schools regularly engage students in rigorous, in-depth academic work, use active intellectual inquiry, and sustained writing and revisions in all classes.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT
Schools design a system of assessment that provides multiple opportunities for students to publicly exhibit knowledge and abilities. Assessments grow out of classroom work and provide ongoing feedback to the school community, the teacher, the student, and the parent/guardian on a student's progress toward achieving academic proficiency.

STUDENT SUPPORT
'Smallness,' less than 100 students per grade level, helps to create a learning community for students and teachers and provides opportunities for flexible and innovative structures to support students academically and emotionally.
All students are known well not only because the school is small, but also because the school values and gives priority to small class size and extended time with teachers both daily and over the course of the student's high school years.

DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE
Purposefully designed structures provide for everyone's voice to be heard and respected in the decision-making process regarding hiring personnel, managing budgets, determining curriculum and pedagogy, developing students' activities, and any other policies that affect the daily life of students and faculty.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Staff participates in on-going, embedded professional development that focuses on student success. Time during the school day is provided for staff development and the creation of learning communities. New teachers are mentored to help them to understand and to implement the goals of the community.

"The Big Four" Dimension of College Readiness

Taken from "What Makes a Student College Ready?" Dr. David T. Conley, October 2008, Education Leadership, Vol. 66, Number 2.

1. **Key Cognitive Strategies**
   Formulate, investigate, understand, analyze, evaluate, integrate, exercise precision, etc.
2. **Key Content Knowledge**
   College knowledge and subject area big ideas.
3. **Key Self-Management Skills**
   Organizations, judgment, study groups, seeking help, reflection, academic behaviors, etc.
4. **Key Knowledge About Postsecondary Education**
   College selection, adult living, applying, financing, college culture, deadlines & details, contextual skills & awareness, etc.

College in High School Opportunities

There are several ways for high school students to earn college credit. Students can follow one of the three pathways listed below or "mix and match" to accelerate academic progress.

1. **Early Middle College:** Designed to allow a pupil to earn a high school diploma while also earning an EMC outcome by continuing education for a 5th year of high school. EMCs provide a well-defined experience for students that is fortified by structured and intentional student support services. EMCs also include a specific and deliberately designed course of study that includes unique social and emotional student support services.

2. **International Baccalaureate (IB)**: IB is a two-year curriculum available in an IB-approved school where students learn a second language and follow an international focus. There is an emphasis on asking challenging questions, critical reflection, developing research skills, and learning how to learn. Students submit a final project at the end of the IB program. Community service is encouraged. Students earn an IB Degree, not individual college credits.

3. **Advanced Placement (AP)**: AP is high school classes that addresses college level curriculum. There are nationally designed AP courses in different subject areas that provide students with the opportunity to take college level courses at high school that are taught by AP-trained high school teachers. AP courses are also available online.

4. **Postsecondary Credit Agreement(s)/Articulated Credit**: High school courses that are aligned with college-level content. Students can earn college

credit after successfully completing the course and meeting specific requirements. Postsecondary credit agreement(s)/articulated credit provides students with a way to start in a career field and potentially earn college credit while in high school. The programs align with specific programs of study at the postsecondary level. A high school teacher and postsecondary faculty agree on the student learning outcomes for a class to articulate from the high school to the college course. Usually, a student must earn a certain grade in the course and then enroll in the college to have the credit added to the college transcript. Postsecondary credit agreements seek to reduce remediation and duplication of coursework and ensure the smooth transfer of credits to colleges post high school education.

5. **Direct Credit/Concurrent Enrollment**: College courses taught at the high school by qualified instructors. Students receive both high school and college credit simultaneously. Direct credit is usually associated with a college faculty member teaching the college course at the high school. Concurrent enrollment is usually used to describe college courses taught in the high school by high school teachers who are also adjunct college faculty. The terms direct credit and concurrent enrollment are used differently throughout the state.

6. **Dual Enrollment**: High school students take actual college courses (either on a college campus or online) and earn credit that potentially applies to both the high school diploma and the college transcript. Dual Enrollment provides an opportunity for students in ninth grade or higher to take college classes while in high school. High school students may participate in dual enrollment by attending at least one high school course and simultaneously attending a degree-granting postsecondary institution.

Dual Enrollment courses are available to all students meeting the eligibility requirements as outlined in the MDE's Dual Enrollment FAQ. Students may or may not receive unique social/emotional supports or complete a degree or certificate while participating in dual enrollment.

Under Dual Enrollment, students enroll in individual courses as outlined in the students' Educational Development Plan (EDP) but are not following a specific degree plan. Dual Enrollment provides for up to 10 postsecondary courses, but a school district can exceed the 10 courses if it is part of the student's EDP. Dual Enrollment is guided by the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act (1996 PA 160) and the Career and Technical Preparation Act (2000 PA 258) and provides for payment from a school district's state aid foundation grant. Visit the Dual Enrollment web page for more information or contact the Office of Educational Supports and Jeff McNeal at 517-241-6958 or mcnealj1@michigan.gov.

The Dual Enrollment and Early Middle College Tip Sheet provides additional information on the differences between DE and EMC and the College Credit in High School Program Definitions gives additional information on other College in High School Opportunities such as Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate.

EMC students can use any combination of College in High School Programs to advance on an academic pathway.

SECTION 2: Postsecondary Institutions Supporting K-12 Districts that Apply to Open an Early Middle College

EMC Application Process

Early Middle Colleges must be started at the secondary level by a school district, Intermediate School District (ISD), or public-school academy. The school will assess the interest in establishing an EMC with key stakeholders thereby securing resources and support. Once the school has developed a plan and vision, it will reach out to potential postsecondary partners to explore program of study options for students.

The postsecondary partner is instrumental in setting up systems of support and helping the school complete the application materials. MDE-OCTE recommends that a representative from the postsecondary partner attend a Michigan Department of Education (MDE) Opening an EMC Workshop for prospective EMCs alongside the school to develop a project plan with key steps for EMC opening and check points. This will help the school submit an EMC Application to MDE-OCTE by the annual EMC Application deadline.

EMC Application Materials

There are several documents that a school district, ISD, or public-school academy must provide to MDE-OCTE in the application for a new early middle college that require the input of the postsecondary partner. High school staff will need input from a postsecondary partner to develop the following:

1) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The MOU is the written agreement between the EMC and 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 a MOU Sample are available on the Early Middle College website. It is recommended that EMCs and postsecondary partners review the MOU yearly.

A MOU must include:

- EMC signature
- Postsecondary partner signature
- Timeframe for the agreement
- Financial and operational responsibilities
- Reporting requirements for secondary in the MSDS General Collections and Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL), and reporting for the postsecondary in the Student Transcript and Academic Record Repository (STARR) system
- Additional items necessary for the partnership

2) Five-Year Program of Study (POS)

Every EMC must have at least one program of study but are 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 POS is a joint document that should be developed by both the college partner and the EMC staff. The high school will ensure that all high school graduation requirements are included, and the postsecondary partner will plan the college coursework. The POS must include:

- EMC name
- Degree or certificate
- Five-year high school courses and college courses
- 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 MMC to be eligible for high school graduation
- Courses that will be taken for high school credit during each count period of the fifth year
- A sample POS is available on the MDE EMC website and educational partners are encouraged to use the sample template to ensure all required fields are identified.

3) 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. The postsecondary partner will assist the EMC by determining the people/job titles within the institution that will be involved with the EMC. Postsecondary roles may include any of the following:

- College Board of Education, President/Dean
- EMC/dual enrollment director, coordinator, or liaison
- EMC coach
- Instructors
- Academic advisor
- Student Success coach
- Registrar
- Career Services
- Information Technology
- Admissions advisor
- Accounts Receivable
- EMC administrative assistant

SECTION 3: Role of the EMC Postsecondary Partner

College Coursework

EMCs are designed with the intent of providing additional access to postsecondary courses. The maximum number of courses 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.

Most EMC students enroll in college courses with other college/university students. Some EMCs may request that college faculty teach to a group of EMC students at a high school campus. Decisions regarding course offerings, academic advising, and college faculty should be detailed in the MOU.

It is plausible for an EMC student to take developmental college courses due to scheduling and/or school/program location limitations as long as the district local funding sources pays 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.

Costs

School districts/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.

EMCs do not receive any additional funding other than the full-time equivalency (FTE) for 13th year students, so the postsecondary partners may choose to discount the tuition and fees for EMC partners. The handling of costs, especially additional costs to students and families, should be detailed in the MOU between the secondary school and postsecondary institution. It is recommended that any costs families could incur be explained prior to a student enrolling as an EMC student.

Postsecondary partners should also consider the following costs in the MOU:

- Parking for students and EMC staff on campus
- Cost for students to print on campus
- Laboratory fees
- Equipment fees

Postsecondary partners are encouraged to work with the EMCs to establish a fair and equitable payment structure, taking into consideration a wide variety of factors including the limited funding available to districts to pay for college tuition. Many different examples of payment agreements exist between K-12 and postsecondary partners. One EMC and college partner have even established a bulk rate for tuition along with office space rental, classrooms, access to the library, etc. which does not require the EMC to pay a per-credit cost. Another way to support the EMC is to explore the possibility of providing scholarships for EMC students continuing at the college/university.

Student Support

The postsecondary partner plays an important role in supporting EMC students throughout the EMC experience. There are many innovative ways that colleges and universities offer support. Listed below are some best practices that have been implemented.

Staff

- Have one designated contact person for secondary partners to communicate needs and concerns to. Examples include a K-12 Partnership Director, Dual Enrollment and EMC Coordinator, or an EMC Academic Success Coach.
- Assign academic advisors to EMC students that are familiar with EMC students and programs of study.
- Employ mentors or coaches that check in with EMC students and serve as a liaison for the student between high school and postsecondary.
- Have an orientation for faculty that will be teaching EMC students.

Activities

- Provide opportunities for students to visit the campus.
- Participate in events that prepare students for college coursework and systems like summer bootcamps or seminar classes.
- 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 and FAFSA.
- Plan support services for EMC students.
- Build a connection for the student with the college. Examples include:
    - Providing students with college merchandise such as lanyards, t-shirts, etc.
    - Acceptance letters welcoming students to the college/university
    - Issue college IDs to EMC students
    - T-shirt idea: "old enough to be in High School, smart enough to be in college"
    - Teach students how to view transcripts, how to register for courses, how to get connected with resources at the college, etc.

- Student support rooms or student lounges for EMC students
- Middle college commitment "signing day"!
- Parent nights and early middle college information sessions to share and communicate policies with students and families
- College Ambassadors Club comprised of EMC Seniors
- Visits to middle schools to talk about future paths to college credit

Systems

- Ensure an alert system is being used to assist in the identification and support of students who are chronically absent or struggling academically or personally. Consider adding the EMC high school staff on the alert notification list.
- Evaluate placement testing requirements. Consider what is necessary to place students into the courses while also considering literature on placement best practices and student success.
- Meet with all departments that may be impacted by the EMC program (deans, instructors, admissions, finance, etc.) on a regular basis to give updates on EMC and address concerns.
- Establish a scholarship for EMC students to use when the students graduate to finish a degree at the partner college/university.
- Provide access to student housing and dining for 5th year EMC students.
- Ensure that EMC is part of the college/university strategic plan.
- Develop materials to market the program for high school students/families as well as high school administrators and counselors. Ideas include brochures, signage, social media posts, swag bags, etc.

College and Career Readiness Curriculum

Some postsecondary partners have worked with their EMCs to develop a preparatory course for EMC students that teaches them the differences between high school and college, prepares them for college-level coursework, and introduces them to college majors and careers. Units of study may include:

- College orientation
- Introduction to the student learning platform (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.)
- Note taking
- Time management
- Study skills
- Tests and test anxiety
- How to access college resources
- Communication skills
- Career preparation
- Employability skills

Technology

Due to geographic challenges, many EMCs are located many miles away from the postsecondary partner(s). Colleges can help to support the EMC by providing technological options to support distance learning. Some options that can make a difference in support include digital signature options for students and staff to approve documents such as student registration, drop/add forms, etc.

Postsecondary partners are encouraged to explore college resources such as foundations and scholarship funding to provide support for loaner laptops, virtual hot spots and/or virtual desktop logins for students to access college courses/ software. High school provided devices, often Chromebooks, do not always work well with college coursework due to filters and settings.

Communication and Marketing

Regular communication between secondary and postsecondary is necessary to build a strong partnership. In addition to reviewing the MOU on a yearly basis, MDE recommends having regular meetings to share data, review outcomes, address concerns, and create goals. Postsecondary partners may also want to participate in recruitment activities with EMC staff like parent meetings and campus tours for students. Postsecondary partners are also encouraged to include information about the EMCs on the college/university website.

Equity and Access

Early Middle College opportunities should be available to all students. MDE encourages EMCs to enroll students who are first generation college students, economically disadvantaged, and underrepresented. Underrepresented students may include students with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, English learners, students that are underperforming academically, etc.

Postsecondary partners can support EMCs with equity and access by reviewing admissions criteria such as GPA and placement testing requirements for dual enrollment/EMC students. Examples of initiatives that postsecondary partners have put in place to reduce barriers for students include:

- Eliminating the cost to students for pencils and other supplies that are needed for courses.
- Offering affordable or free college housing for the 5th year if needed.
- Offering affordable or free options for food on campus. The Michigan Department of Education has developed guidance titled EMC National School Lunch Program for schools on providing meals for 5th year EMC students.
- Providing options for students to print on campus for free.

- Creating a guide for students with disabilities to understand how to navigate services at the postsecondary level.
- Providing bus passes for public transportation or having a shuttle that runs between campuses if the postsecondary partner has multiple locations.

Students with Disabilities

Early Middle Colleges often enroll students that receive accommodations through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan. Although the high school will be overseeing and providing these accommodations at the secondary level for high school coursework, EMC staff will also work with the students to apply for accommodations at the postsecondary institution for college coursework. Postsecondary partners can assist EMCs in this effort by creating guidance documents or presenting information about disability services to students and families.

Athletics

Early Middle College students are eligible to participate in high school athletics in grades 9-12. Under the rules of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA), students are not eligible to participate in high school athletics during the 13th grade. Students are not eligible to participate in collegiate athletics in grades 9-12.

Students in the 5th year may be eligible to participate in athletics at a community college due to a 2023 decision by the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) to allow students concurrently enrolled in state-approved high school/college programs to participate in NJCAA athletics. Students must have completed all their high school graduation requirements, exhausted their high school athletic eligibility and received written approval from the NJCAA, prior to participation in NJCAA athletics.

Due to the unique academic and athletic situation of each student, and the complexity of the NJCAA eligibility rules, it is recommended that each potential student-athlete discuss their athletic eligibility with the athletic personnel at the NJCAA college where they have chosen to attend.

Data

Early Middle Colleges need data to demonstrate the value, viability, and impact of college in high school for students. EMCs and the college's registrar/institutional research office should collaborate on ways to share data.

Aligning the student outcome data for reporting in Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL) and Student Transcript and Academic Record Repository (STARR) is important. The TSDL data is submitted by the K-12 district and the STARR data by

the college. Best practice is for EMCs and the college to work together to confirm the student's Unique Identification Code (UIC) and legal name to ensure valid data entry. UIC matching runs based on UIC, and core fields (last name, first name, date of birth, and gender) and colleges should ensure this information is correct prior entering into the college's Student Information System (SIS) and then eventually uploading into STARR. When entering data into STARR, colleges should not generate a new UIC for EMC students because the students already have an assigned number.

Student outcome data is tracked by CEPI and reported on MI School Data under EMC Student Enrollment and Outcomes. See IHE Request for UIC User Guide and/or Section 4 for more information about EMC data collection and reporting.

Section 4: Data

MI School Data

MI School Data is the State of Michigan's official source for education data. EMC data that is provided in MI School Data includes a searchable map for EMCs by types of programs and locations including building, county, district, and college. EMC enrollment and outcomes data is also available including college credits earned and the number and type of EMC awards earned by students that can be filtered by school year, ISD, EMC, and demographic data. Colleges and universities looking for specific data on existing EMCs can search MI School Data.

Michigan Student Data System (MSDS)

The MSDS is a repository for information related to students receiving education in the State of Michigan. The General Collections, TSDL and STARR are all reported in MSDS.

General Collections (Fall, Spring and End of Year)

These collections contain the bulk of all K-12 student data and are used for pupil membership counts, program participation, school aid funding, and multiple federal and state reporting needs. All secondary partners must report EMC participation, graduation exits, and EMC Additional Awards such as associate degrees earned in the General Collections.

Teacher Student Data Link (TSDL)

This collection links students, courses and the teachers together. All secondary partners must report Dual Enrollment and EMC courses and college credit in TSDL. Data in this collection should align with that reported in STARR.

Student Transcript and Academic Record Repository (STARR)

This postsecondary collection is used for reporting community college, public, and select private university student data. All postsecondary partners must report in STARR.

STARR Reporting for EMC students:

- Report only those courses that count toward attaining completion of accreditation, certification, licensing and/or postsecondary degrees by the end of the student's fifth year of high school and are included on the student's transcript.

- Report EMC students as non-degree-seeking in STARR. This allows CEPI to place students in the correct cohorts using STARR data in concert with MSDS General and TSDL data, ensuring accuracy of postsecondary success rates.
- Colleges should verify if students are Dual Enrolled or Early Middle College students.

Data Sharing

An important component of the EMC and postsecondary partnership is the collection, review, and sharing of data on a regular basis. Presenting EMC data to stakeholders on a yearly basis will promote a culture of continuous improvement. The following are best practices regarding data:

- Schedule periodic meetings with the EMC partner to review MSDS General, TSDL, EEM and STARR 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. Students could participate in both.
- Create a data sharing agreement with the EMC that addresses the types of data, data utilization, how frequently data will be provided, and how confidentiality of data will be maintained.
- Providing regular data (recommended at least twice a year) to the EMC that includes how students are performing in different types of classes, overall credits earned, average grade point average, credential completion information, etc.

Student Transcripts

EMCs are required to collect college transcripts as verification of the attainment of a degree or credential. Postsecondary partners should provide the EMC with college transcripts, which is permissible under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as EMCs have a legitimate educational interest.

Section 5: Collaboration and Professional Development

Collaboration

Postsecondary institutions can build strong relationships with EMCs through the following:

- Collaborate with EMCs to discuss community service or job 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.
- 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.
- Support EMCs in managing the various requirements of multiple postsecondary partners. The timing of course and varied deadlines for registration, drop/add, graduation audits, etc. can be very different making managing these dates difficult. Working with EMC partners to find dates and deadlines that work for both parties is very helpful.
- 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 such as Guided Pathways revisions.
- Communicate with the EMC if a student drops a course or an instructor drops a student. Changes to student schedules can pose challenges for the EMC in maintaining the student as a fulltime student. Some colleges have a policy that a student cannot change a schedule without the EMC signing off.
- Implement priority registration for EMC students, if possible. This allows for 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.

Professional Development

There are many avenues for professional development for colleges related to EMC and College in High School Opportunities.

- Become members in 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.
- Attend the Michigan Career Education Conference (MI-CEC)
- Attend the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)
- Utilize resources available through the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) and attend the MCAN Annual Conference
- Participate in the triannual EMC Update Sessions available on the MDE EMC website.

Michigan Early Middle College Association (MEMCA)

MEMCA is a voluntary alliance of educators actively involved with one, or more, of the Early Middle Colleges working toward significantly increasing the collegiate and postsecondary success and completion rate of Michigan youth. The group comes together to share best practices, develop a community of learners and reflective practitioners, and share research with the broad high school transformation community. MEMCA is governed by a Leadership Council of members.

MEMCA provides the vehicle for awarding an Early Middle College Technical Certificate as an additional option in lieu of an associate degree or other certificates typically given by community colleges. MEMCA believes that Dr. David T. Conley's work should be studied and embedded into all EMC models.

The MDE has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on file designating the responsibilities of MDE and MEMCA regarding EMCs.

Purpose of MEMCA

The purpose of the MEMCA is threefold:

1. Professional development
    - Reflective practice
    - Professional learning community
    - Best practice dissemination
    - Technical assistance for members and groups seeking to develop new Early Middle Colleges
2. Research and contribution to the literature related to Early Middle Colleges
    - Share outcomes and best practice
    - Data collection and analysis
    - Contribute unique perspectives to high school transformation literature
    - Share student voice as well as educator voice

- Collect and disseminate state-wide data

3. College and Career Readiness
    - Michigan Early Middle College Association Technical Certificate
    - Student readiness for college coursework

MEMCA Student Certificate

An EMC has the option to present the Career and College Readiness Curriculum, for approval by the MEMCA Leadership Council, before its first EMC cohort graduation. This approval will allow the EMC the right to confer the MEMCA Technical Certificate. This certificate will support students entering the EMCs that are behind on high school credit, and/or may **not** graduate with an associate degree, a professional certification, have not participated in a registered apprenticeship, or received 60 transferable college credits.

To award the MEMCA Technical Certificate, an EMC must present the college readiness curriculum and EMC overview to the MEMCA Leadership Council and receive approval. The MEMCA presentations occur four times each year during April, May, October, and November. The EMC must be in the second year of operation or further and attend a MEMCA workshop to learn about the requirements necessary to confer the MEMCA certificate. MEMCA staff will contact the EMC to invite staff to attend the workshop to prepare to present to the Leadership Council and schedule a date for the presentation. The presentation team should include the district administrator, a counselor, teacher, EMC Coordinator, and postsecondary partners. To receive a MEMCA certificate, a student must complete the following:

- The Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)
- A minimum of 15 non-remedial college credits
- The member school's MEMCA approved College Readiness Curriculum

And one (1) of the following options:

- 100 hours of verified community service
- A minimum of 40 hours of verified career exploration, internship, job shadowing or clinical experience
- Or a combination of the two that equals 70+ hours

MEMCA Membership

There are no fees to be a member of MEMCA. All EMCs are automatically enrolled in MEMCA as members, once the application to open a new EMC is approved.

Dr. Chery S. Wagonlander EMC Excellence in Practice Awards

Two awards are solicited and awarded every year at MDE and MEMCA events in recognition of Dr. Wagonlander and her leadership in creating the Early Middle College System in Michigan. The awards recognize Excellence in Practice in EMCs at both the secondary and postsecondary levels. A link to the application, process, timeline, and details are available at MDE's EMC web page.

SECTION 6: List of Colleges and Universities with EMC Partnerships

1. Alpena Community College (7 EMC Partnerships)
2. Baker College (9 EMC Partnerships)
3. Bay de Noc Community College (15 EMC Partnerships)
4. Bay Mills Community College (1 EMC Partnership)
5. Central Michigan University (1 EMC Partnership)
6. Cleary University (2 EMC Partnerships)
7. Davenport University (12 EMC Partnerships)
8. Delta College (12 EMC Partnerships)
9. Eastern Michigan University (2 EMC Partnership)
10. Ferris State University (8 EMC Partnerships)
11. Glen Oaks Community College (1 EMC Partnership)
12. Gogebic Community College (5 EMC Partnerships)
13. Grand Rapids Community College (6 EMC Partnerships)
14. Henry Ford College (12 EMC Partnerships)
15. Hope College (2 EMC Partnership)
16. Jackson College (7 EMC Partnerships)
17. Kalamazoo Valley Community College (3 EMC Partnerships)
18. Kellogg Community College (14 EMC Partnerships)
19. Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College (1 EMC Partnership)
20. Kirtland Community College (4 EMC Partnerships)
21. Lake Michigan College (4 EMC Partnerships)
22. Lake Superior State University (4 EMC Partnerships)
23. Lansing Community College (6 EMC Partnerships)
24. Lawrence Technological University (6 EMC Partnerships)
25. Macomb Community College (5 EMC Partnerships)
26. Madonna University (1 EMC Partnership)
27. Mid Michigan College (11 EMC Partnerships)
28. Monroe County Community College (3 EMC Partnerships)

Colleges and Universities with EMC Partnerships Continued

29. Montcalm Community College (2 EMC Partnerships)
30. Mott Community College (15 EMC Partnerships)
31. Muskegon Community College (4 EMC Partnerships)
32. North Central Michigan College (4 EMC Partnerships)
33. Northern Michigan University (1 EMC Partnership)
34. Northwestern Michigan College (3 EMC Partnerships)
35. Northwood University (1 EMC Partnership)
36. Oakland Community College (4 EMC Partnerships)
37. Rochester Christian University (4 EMC Partnerships)
38. Saginaw Valley State University (1 EMC Partnership)
39. Schoolcraft College (3 EMC Partnerships)
40. Southwestern Michigan College (3 EMC Partnerships)
41. St. Clair County Community College (2 EMC Partnerships)
42. University of Michigan - Flint (11 EMC Partnerships)
43. Washtenaw Community College (8 EMC Partnerships)
44. Wayne County Community College (14 EMC Partnerships)
45. Western Michigan University (1 EMC Partnership)
46. West Shore Community College (2 EMC Partnerships)

For the most recent list of colleges and universities, please visit the Early Middle College website.

SECTION 7: Web Resources

Career and Technical Education (CTE)
Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI)
Early Middle College (EMC)
Michigan Association of Career and Technical Education
Michigan Department of Education (MDE)
Middle College National Consortium (MCNC)
MI School Data

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