Dr. Chery S. Wagonlander Early Middle College Excellence in Practice Awards

MICHIGAN EARLY MIDDLE COLLEGES

Postsecondary Award Information

The Michigan Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education (MDE-OCTE), in partnership with the Michigan Early Middle College Association (MEMCA), is excited to announce the Dr. Chery S. Wagonlander Early Middle College Excellence in Practice Awards. One award will be presented to a secondary practitioner and one to a postsecondary practitioner, and recipients will be invited to attend the Michigan Career Education Conference and MEMCA Conference to receive the award and be recognized. Please note that there is a separate nomination form for each award.

Purpose

The Dr. Chery S. Wagonlander Excellence in Practice Postsecondary Award recognizes postsecondary practitioners for their leadership, influence, execution, and contributions to successful EMC programs in Michigan. Nominees may include administrators, counselors, advisors, administrative staff, faculty, or other postsecondary staff in EMC roles.

Eligibility

- Candidates must be currently employed or retired postsecondary professionals.
- Retired candidates must have retired within two years of the year the award is to be given.
- Candidates may nominate themselves for an award or be nominated by a third party.
- The nomination deadline is 11:59 p.m. on Friday, November 6, 2026.

How to Submit a Nomination

1. Nominations are gathered through a Microsoft Form.

   Complete the nomination form: Dr. Chery S. Wagonlander EMC Excellence in Practice Postsecondary Award

2. The nominator must gather two letters in support of the nomination. Letters may be written by individuals in the following categories, with no more than one letter from each category: supervisor, parent/family member, student, employee, colleague, secondary partner, postsecondary partner, or community leader.

   Submit letters of support: Email letters of support to MDE-OCTE-Submissions@michigan.gov.

What to Consider When Completing the Nomination Form

Strong nominations provide specific examples that demonstrate the nominee's contributions, impact, and sustained commitment to EMCs. Consider the nominee's EMC work over their career and describe what they did, how they contributed, and the difference their work has made. Evidence may include initiatives led, systems created, partnerships developed, practices implemented, or contributions recognized by others.

Note: see Evaluation Criteria on page 3 for detailed information.

Questions? Please contact:

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Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	What Evaluators Look For
Leadership and Influence	Contributions as the regional, state, or national level such as leading MEMCA initiatives, statewide workgroups, EMC design teams, or national efforts.
Innovations and Contributions	Innovative systems, programming, or practices that meaningfully enhance the EMC experience and are adopted, replicated, or recognized beyond the local partnership.
Service to EMC Community	Mentorship of staff, faculty, advisors, and administrators across multiple programs, serving as a statewide resource through MEMCA, or supporting new or expanding EMCs.
EMC Professional Development	Designing and delivering high-quality EMC-focused professional learning at state, national, or multi-regional conferences and workshops, including developing resources that others go on to use.
Program Expansion and Development	Creating, redesigning, or expanding EMC partnerships. Playing a major role in design teams, developing new pathways, strengthening transfer opportunities, or expanding access across multiple schools or regions.
Student Recruitment, Access, and Equity	Strategic, data-informed efforts that expand equitable access and representation, with evidence that underserved populations are being recruited and retained.
Student Outcomes and Support	Comprehensive student support systems backed by data showing strong persistence, completion, and transition results.
Student, Family and Community Engagement	A highly engaging, welcoming college experience for EMC students and families, with sustainable programming, mentorship, and connections that model best practice for others.