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

MICHIGAN EARLY MIDDLE COLLEGES

Secondary 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 EMC Secondary Award recognizes secondary EMC practitioners for their leadership, influence, execution, and contributions to successful EMC programs in Michigan. The awardees include EMC administrators, counselors, administrative staff, EMC coordinators, and EMC teachers.

Eligibility
- Candidates must currently be employed or retired secondary EMC professionals.
- Retired candidates must have retired within two years of the year the award is being 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 Secondary 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:
Jennifer Thomas, Early Middle College Education Consultant
Michigan Department of Education
Office of Career and Technical Education
ThomasJ85@Michigan.gov or MDE-OCTE-General@michigan.gov
517-897-4970

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	What Evaluators Look For
Leadership and Influence	Evidence that the nominee shapes EMC practice beyond their own program — through local, regional, statewide or national leadership, thought leadership, or influence on policy and practice.
Innovations and Contributions	New models, systems, or approaches the nominee has designed to solve complex challenges and improve program effectiveness.
Service to EMC Community	Mentoring, coaching, or resource-sharing that supports EMCs outside the nominee's own organization.
EMC Professional Development	Designing and delivering EMC-specific workshops, conference sessions, or training materials for staff or peers at a local, state, or national level.
Program Expansion and Development	Launching a new EMC or significantly growing an existing one, such as adding programs of study, postsecondary partners, or employer/community partnerships.
Student Recruitment, Access, and Equity	Strategic, data-informed efforts that expand equitable access to EMC programs, with evidence that underserved populations are being recruited and retained.
Student Outcomes and Support	Data-driven advising and support systems built in close collaboration with the postsecondary partner, resulting in measurable gains in student achievement and persistence.
Student, Family, and Community Engagement	A sustained, structured culture of engagement connecting students, families, and community partners.