

# Early College - Part A Application (Due October 15, 2019)

Response ID:41 Data

## 2. I. Applicant and Partner Information

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### Today's date

10/10/2019

### K-12 Partner Contact Information

#### District Name

Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School

#### High School

Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School

#### K-12 Contact Person - First Name

Tia

#### K-12 Contact Person - Last Name

Roy

#### K-12 Contact Person - Title (e.g., Principal, Head of School, Executive Director)

Director of Community Partnerships

#### K-12 Contact Person - E-mail

troy@whittiertech.org

#### K-12 Contact Person - Phone Number

978-373-4101x327

### Institution of Higher Education Partner Contact Information

#### Higher Education Institution

Northern Essex Community College

#### IHE Contact Person - First Name

Marcy

#### IHE Contact Person - Last Name

Yeager

#### IHE Contact Person - Title

Executive Director PK12 Partnerships and International Programs

#### IHE Contact Person - E-mail

myeager@necc.mass.edu

#### IHE Contact Person - Phone Number

978-556-3326

**For the secondary school: is this designation application for an entirely new program or enhancing a currently existing program to qualify for designation status?**

This designation application is for a significant expansion of existing dual enrollment programming between Whittier Technical High School (WTHS) and Northern Essex Community College (NECC).

**For the institution for higher education: is this designation application for an entirely new program or enhancing a currently existing program to qualify for designation status?**

This designation application, as noted above, is a large expansion of a dual enrollment program with WTHS to meet the level of an Early College program that includes multiple years of programming and a high level of student support services.

**Do the partners already have any agreements involving dual enrollment?**

Yes

**Designated programs are expected to enroll students no later than beginning of 10th grade, so that participating students receive at least 3 years of pathway services as enrolled students, allowing for some exceptions permitted for 11th graders with appropriate experience. Indicate here whether you will enroll students in 9th or in 10th grade.**

10th Grade

**Indicate if you applied for planning grant funding in Summer 2019.**

Yes

**The ECJC will award designation to applicants who fulfill essential elements of Early College program design and provide sufficient evidence that the program has enrolled students as defined by the Designation Criteria, or that the applicant has developed all necessary infrastructure to begin enrolling students upon designation. Note that this is not a competitive process as there is no cap on the number of designations. In contrast, funding will be awarded competitively in accordance with the requirements articulated within a separate application, due September 3, 2019. \***

Check to confirm agreement.

**Does the secondary institution offer approved Ch. 74 programming?**

Yes

**Does the secondary institution currently receive Perkins funding?**

Yes

**If not already done, applicants are expected to register for and send a team to participate in DESE's MyCAP training next year, concurrently with their participation in the Early College designation process. The training will equip them to fulfill Early College expectations for high quality college and career advising and MyCAP development embedded in the pathway. Note that funding received from the planning grant opportunity may be allocated to cover costs associated with participation in the training.**

YES, the Applicant high school will register and participate in the College and Career Advising Workshop Series in FY20.

**If completed, when did the applicant complete MyCAP training? (Note month and year.)**

### 3. II. Introductory Narrative

**A. Please provide an introductory narrative describing the partnership, the vision for this Early College program, and the desired impact of the program. Describe the potential and vision for the proposed Early College program for your students, your school and campus, and your region. Field limited to 1,000 words.**

Northern Essex Community College and Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School have had a strong and multi-faceted PK-12 partnership over the past several years which includes: articulated credit, dual enrollment in the Advanced Manufacturing degree program through the shop program, offering when possible dual enrollment courses in the academic areas, students choosing to enroll individually in courses at NECC for dual enrollment, and of course a continuous relationship for transfer from WTHS to NECC. While each piece of the partnership is wonderful, as partners, we believe now is the time to create a comprehensive program accessible to all attending WTHS. The desire to apply for Early College Designation is aligned with both institutions desire to align programming to serve a greater number of students and to ensure that any student interested in the program has an opportunity to participate.

Whittier is located in the gateway city of Haverhill Massachusetts. The day school educates 1,246 students from 11 different communities. The communities in Whittier's region are made up of three cities - Amesbury, Newburyport, and Haverhill; and the towns of Georgetown, Groveland, Ipswich, Merrimac, Newbury, Rowley, Salisbury, and West Newbury. Whittier has a 22.8% special education population, 28.2% economically disadvantaged population, and a 46.2% high needs student population; 5.1% of Whittier's students did not have English as their first language and 1.1% of the student body is considered English Language Learners. Within Whittier's day program, they educate 673 males and 573 females. The student body is broken up by the following races/ethnicities: 2.3% African American, 1.0% Asian, 20.9% Hispanic, .3% Native American, 71.9% White, and 3.5% Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic. Whittier has a 96% graduation rate and of those graduates, 15% attend a four-year private college/university, 16.3% attend a four-year public college/university, 1.3% attend a private two-year college, 23.7% attend a public two-year college, and 2.3% pursue other postsecondary activities. While 28.3% head to a career, 3.0% enter the military, .3% are considered other, and 9.7% are considered unknown. (2017-2018 School Profile data)

Whittier is a Title I school. As a school-wide program, the Title I program at Whittier provides supplemental educational support services in math and/or reading to students currently performing below grade level or demonstrating significant gaps in academic achievement. Students are identified as needing services based on multiple criteria, including formal assessments, a district Skills Assessment, previous MCAS scores, grades, and teacher recommendations. A goal of this program is to encourage and enable students to be able to access higher education with the support of their high school program. In recent years, Whittier has collaborated with NECC to provide Composition I and Composition II to students seeking dual enrollment opportunities. On average, 42 seniors have participated each year, with some students also completing college coursework outside of the school day. Early College designation will provide additional coursework to students in grades 11 and 12, potentially doubling participation rates and college credit for students. The student support planning that the designation process initiates will serve the student population at WTHS increasing the students enrolled in the courses.

The vision is to support any student at WTHS that has an interest in higher education both directly following graduation or after a period of time in the workforce. At present, this vision is hindered by the funding structure, campus capacity, and advising models, all of which NECC and WTHS are excited to review and revise. The current payment model for dual enrolled credits at WTHS is dependent upon the student's ability to pay. The district provides assistance as available through grant opportunities offered through NECC and district funds. Whittier has committed to funding a cohort of students and both institutions believe that this funding will best be applied if done using the Early College Designation framework as a guideline. Early College Designation has the potential to provide consistent financial support of the program and increase the access for all families in the district regardless of income.

**B. What do you anticipate will be the three greatest challenges to meeting the criteria for Early College designation? Please describe each challenge and primary consideration for solutions. Field limited to 1,000 words.**

As is often the case with exciting opportunities there are limiting factors that we must review and overcome. Below are several specific examples of hurdles the NECC and WTHS team are delving into and refining possible solutions. However, it must be said that ultimately the largest limiting factor is operational funding and its direct impact on Equitable Access and growth within the program. Both Whittier and NECC are committed to create a strong Early College framework that will support student work throughout high school with college level work for two academic years. Funding for this work will come from a combination of NECC's reduced tuition rate paid by the district on a per pupil basis and strategic use of grant funds whenever possible (ex. CDEP). This funding model immediately limits the number of students able to enroll in the program solely due to funding. The IHE and High School partners will use planning time to simultaneously create a model that maintains access and maximizes enrollment, will create pathways that maximize opportunity for the largest number of students, and will seek alternative funding models to ultimately be able to increase student cohorts as interest and programming continue.

The second challenge we anticipate overcoming is Guiding Principle 5: Challenge of physical space on campus and transportation. While there is dedicated space for EC students on both the Haverhill and Lawrence campuses of NECC, the daily student schedule of a Whittier student does not allow for this program model to be run on the NECC Haverhill campus. We recognize that an Early College program run at the IHE is ideal for creating a comprehensive student experience within dual enrollment programs; however given the restrictions of a technical high school, the program will dominantly run at the High School location, only 4 miles from the NECC Haverhill campus. Whittier students are on a unique schedule where they spend each Wednesday through Tuesday in their academic courses and swap to their vocational courses the following Wednesday through Tuesday throughout the academic year. This academic and vocational exposure allows for students to experience both their academic coursework and their vocational training within the traditional Monday through Friday week. During the academic week schedule, all students spend approximately 44 minutes in each class period for 8 periods a day.

This schedule provides a few barriers for both NECC and WTHS. First, space is at a premium as there are two academic cohorts; second, the model will require nontraditional meetings by the NECC instructor. Both of these issues combined increase the need for a dedicated student space and access to student support services. The NECC EC space and all student support services are available after school hours as needed. We recognize this poses as a barrier for many students who may participate in afterschool programs and/or not have personal transportation, however these services are available to all EC students provided campus is open. A promising solution is to dedicate a student space, outside of the course time for EC students. This space will serve as an academic study center for peers and be host to NECC Early College office hours and WTHS EC staff support time. An ideal solution, which will require thought and possible use of planning grant funds to create, align, and prepare for implementation is to bring the NECC support staff to Whittier as needed. Each Early College student at NECC is assigned both an Early College coordinator and a college Navigator, a touchstone person to help students connect with support needs. Both the coordinator and navigator might spend time in the space.

While this concern over space may appear minimal, it has been noted by both WTHS and NECC that imperative to student success in any dual enrollment program is creating a cohort culture that fosters support and wrap around services in addition to personal student advocacy and planning. Creating this culture in an EC program housed at the High School, with routine visits to campus, is both a critical challenge and priority over this planning period.

A final challenge that should be noted we are already anticipating overcoming with planning and strategic curriculum alignment is the integration of Early College prep course work as early as 9th grade. We anticipate enrollment in the program as early as rising 10th graders, however the alternating schedule described above will create a scarcity of time challenge. Current solutions are just now being discussed but include summer programming, after school options, fusion into existing academic programming, and online options.

#### 4. III. Adherence to Guiding Principles

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##### **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.**

**A. Provide requested demographic data in an Excel document for the applicant secondary school, including but not limited to: (1) student population as broken down by race and ethnicity, (2) students who are economically disadvantaged/low income, (3) English language learners (ELL), and (4) students with disabilities (SWD). In the comment box below, provide a breakdown of the demographic data for the students you propose to serve. Be sure to include students who are underrepresented in higher education, or who may be first generation college-goers.**

[NECC\\_Whittier\\_Regional\\_VTHS\\_Student\\_Demographics\\_2018-19.xlsx](#)

Comments:

**B. Provide the targeted total student enrollment for the first year of the program (or, current enrollment for existing programs).**

	Current Students	Projected New Students	Total Students
FY 20	41	0	41

**Provide the target enrollments for subsequent years.**

	Projected New Students	Total Number of Projected Students
FY 21	25	66
FY 22	33	99

**c. Describe your process for identifying students for inclusion in your proposed program(s). This specifically includes the target audiences identified above as well as any students who may be first generation college-goers. Include, if applicable, how the program will leverage the work of existing college access programming to identify students who would benefit from the program.**

The existing college access programming begins at grade 11 and has been limited to advertisement through the English curriculum, guidance office, and Parent engagement events. The Early College Program will begin information and recruitment activities in grade 9 and enroll students in grade 10. All students will receive information through whole group assemblies and Open House activities. Parent/family outreach will occur throughout the year at school community events (Open House, Parent Night, etc) and recruitment materials will be available in the district offices and library. Guidance staff will identify first generation college-goers through their curriculum and College and Career Plan development. Additional support will be provided through guidance for the special populations identified for inclusion in the program.

**D. Describe the outreach and recruitment strategies you will employ to proactively target students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education, including students of color, students who are economically disadvantaged, English language learners, students with disabilities, and students who may otherwise not yet have a perception that they are a**

**college-going student and have access to postsecondary opportunities.**

Through a series of whole group assemblies in grade 9, students will receive presentations and literature describing the Early College Program. For special populations (SWD, ELL), information and literature will be discussed as part of the IEP Transition Plan and ELL annual meetings. Through survey data gathered by the Guidance staff, first generation college students will be supported with additional parent engagement activities and support. Recruitment materials and presentations to 8th grade applicants will include information about the early college opportunities that exist.

**E. In consideration of the data presented above, how will your plan ensure that the targeted populations enroll?**

Demographic data will be analyzed to ensure that participation by underrepresented groups will be maintained. Guidance counselors will reach out to students and families who may be eligible and interested in the early college programs. Additional outreach will be done to recruit students into this program as well.

**F. Provide any information you'd like to share regarding your program's commitment to Equitable Access.**

The district is committed to high standards of learning for all students. Students are encouraged to challenge themselves and a continuum of services and levels of instruction are provided throughout the district. At Whittier, the policy is that all students who are interested in a course are encouraged to enroll and academic supports are built in to ensure their success.

**G. Describe the partners' initial plan in regards to funding and offering the Early College program free for all student participants- including tuition, fees, and other related expenses.**

WTHS has committed to providing 12 college credits at no cost for WTHS EC Program participants. The funding for Early College programming was included in the district's budget for up to 4 sections per semester at NECC's EC tuition rate of \$110/credit. This will serve a year one cohort of up to 66 students.

NECC will work to minimize other expenses such as course supplies and texts, through the college's courses offering Open Educational Resources. WTHS has allocated a part of the budget to fund textbooks. NECC will seek to run courses where there is an opportunity to purchase commonly used texts whenever possible helping decrease the overall text costs.

**H. Should student applications\* exceed program capacity, what other admissions methods would you offer in order to support equitable access (i.e. lottery)?**

***\*Programs need to require a written application for student participation in the proposed program(s), and confirmation of program admission should also be issued in writing. Program administrators must agree to save completed applications for program admission.***

If student applications exceed program capacity the district will explore other options for participation. If none are available, a lottery will be implemented to support equitable access.

**I. Because Early College has the ability to broaden both opportunities and success for underserved students in higher education, it is important that students are not excluded due to past academic performance. Describe how the Early College program will determine students' admission into the program without regard to past academic performance.**

Participation in the Early College Program is open to all WTHS students. To be eligible to participate in the Early College Program, NECC Early College Staff and high school staff evaluate a student's recent academic record, within the current academic term, to determine the following: whether the student is on track with local and state graduation requirements, assignment completion, and attendance. Decisions made by school staff may include an interview component to allow students to express their interest and commitment and to discuss how the Early College Program would help them accomplish their career and academic goals.

Student eligibility to participate in the WTHS program is determined by the administrative team based on consideration of the following selection criteria:

- o Record of good attendance within current academic year;
- o Open Response Essays and/or interviews;
- o Recommendation from current English and/or Math Teacher evaluating mutually agreed upon college readiness skills to be reviewed by NECC; and
- o Current academic success in pre-requisite high school course work in the content area they will pursue.

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**J. A student may seek admission into the program in grade 11. Please describe how you would incorporate that student into the Early College program, and provide them all the services expected for the pathway, including experiences the student would have obtained in earlier grades (e.g., MyCAP).**

Any student that may not have been academically prepared to join the 10th grade Early College cohort will have an opportunity to join in 11th or 12th grade. These students may request a review of attendance, an interview, and/or any of the criteria listed above. All criteria will be evaluated for the student's current term. Student support services offered to a first year Early College student will be no different for any student entering during a later semester. The Early College Program is mapped over two academic years with a student taking one course per semester. If a student places into the Early College program in their 11th grade year they may choose to enroll in one course per semester, graduating with only 6 credits, or opt into 2 courses per semester taken on alternating days during the academic weeks at the high school. Students choosing to take two courses per semester will be required to meet with an academic coach routinely to ensure they are receiving all the student support services that would have been delivered in the summer transitions program and are needed to see academic success. Student Flex time and potentially some after school time will be dedicated to supporting the student with other areas of college and career readiness.

All students will participate in College and Career programming that support transition into the program in grade 11.

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**Upload any additional supporting documents here.**

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## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2 - GUIDED ACADEMIC PATHWAYS**

*Designated programs should be structured around clear and detailed student academic pathways from secondary and post-secondary education with regard to coursework, sequencing, and experiences beyond the classroom. In the Early College pathway, students should be expected to complete at least 12 college credits that count towards a postsecondary credential. Programs should also offer students substantive exposure to career opportunities in high demand fields, allowing them to make an informed decisions about which career pathway to pursue. Students should also be exposed to the authentic experience and academic rigor of postsecondary education. This would require validating that courses are as rigorous as college level courses offered on campuses. Further, programs should prioritize allowing students to take courses on college and university campuses where possible, and otherwise offer experiences intended to acculturate students to the post-secondary experience.*

**A. Upload a Word document outlining the scope and sequence of high school and college courses for participating students. State the range of college credits that will be available to be completed.**

[NECC\\_Whittier\\_Scope\\_and\\_Sequence.docx](#)

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**B. Describe how labor market information (LMI) and input from area employers, to the extent possible, will be used to inform the program design so as to reflect an alignment of course taking to credentials desired in the region (e.g. associate's degrees, bachelor's degrees).**

Whittier consistently aligns its college and career pathways career opportunities in a broad sector category with high employer demand, based on regional priorities of the Workforce Skills Cabinet or other quantifiable labor market needs, including endorsements by local employers and/or the local Workforce Investment Board. Whittier continuously utilizes the Regional Labor Market Blueprint when creating new programs to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the region. Whittier

staff then takes the identified industries and examines the roles that they play in the economy when considering the impact that these professions have on larger industries as well as the regional economy overall and then make the determination if the course or program can work within a program of studies. Youth Principle 1 of the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board's (MVWIB) Strategic plan states that there is a need to provide students with help in acquiring the savvy required to get a job in today's labor market. To meet this goal WTHS and NECC provide training on work readiness and career exploration and take responsibility for brokering relationships between young people and local businesses. As a school system, Whittier believes that workforce development efforts should include supporting partnerships and programs based on input from labor market data and area employers. The alignment of Whittier technical programs in addition to the Early College courses align with NECC's suite of credentials and transfer agreements.

**C. Describe how the college coursework will be articulated with MassCore and the high school's graduation requirements.**

Curriculum will be aligned to meet high school graduation requirements. Students will receive high school credit for the MassCore coursework completed.

**D. Describe when and where college coursework will be completed. Applicants are strongly encouraged to teach at least some courses on the campus of the postsecondary partner.**

The daily student schedule of a Whittier student does not allow for this program model to be run on the NECC Haverhill campus. We recognize that an Early College program run at the IHE is ideal for creating a comprehensive student experience within dual enrollment programs, however given the restrictions of the technical high school, the program will dominantly run at the High School location, only 4 miles from the NECC Haverhill campus. Whittier students are on a unique schedule where they spend each Wednesday through Tuesday in their academic courses and swap to their vocational courses the following Wednesday through Tuesday throughout the academic year. This academic and vocational exposure allows for students to experience both their academic coursework and their vocational training within the traditional Monday through Friday week. During the academic week schedule all students spend approximately 44 minutes in each class period for 8 periods a day. NECC faculty teaching at WTHS will offer all courses in a hybrid format to support student technical and academic schedules. Regardless of the hurdle of delivery location, Whittier and NECC are committed to creating opportunities that would enable students to regularly visit and experience the college campus and explore its resources. Presently, NECC and WTHS are reviewing the total transportation costs of running the summer transitional experience for rising 11th (Year 1 EC Students) at Northern Essex as a possible opportunity to ensure students have an opportunity to explore the NECC Haverhill Campus.

**E. Provide a short description of what the school currently uses to provide individualized college and career planning for all students. This will be the starting point for the school's My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP), formerly referred to as Individualized Learning Plans implementation. The expectation for MyCAP is that activities will start in grade 9. Note that an applicant is required to involve students in MyCAP even if enrollment in the pathway will take place in 10th grade. For additional information, see the College and Career Advising (CCA) Framework. In your description, be sure to specify which on-line platform will be used to manage student plans, including:**

**MEFA Pathways (formerly known as Your Plan for the Future)**

**Naviance**

**Xello**

**MassCIS**

**Other – Provide name of platform**

Whittier Tech school counselors use the MA Model 2.0 to deliver College and Career Readiness activities. Whittier Tech uses the college and career plan and the Naviance System as instruments to provide academic, college, and career planning for all students. This begins in Grade 9. In Naviance, students go through a series of assessments to explore careers, colleges, and set goals. College and Career Plans include exploring career clusters, identifying their college and career-readiness skills, academic strengths, personal attributes, and vocational areas of interest. The College and Career Plan also assists students in developing goals and action steps to complete these goals. Whittier has moved to a school-wide implementation where the different academic and vocational areas assist students in developing their ePortfolios. The Portfolios contain work from all academic areas, the career readiness activities from their vocational area, as well as their career plans. It is a google site that can be shared with their teachers and counselors.

**F. Confirm that all students in the Early College program will develop a plan for postsecondary education and/or training**

that will be captured in their MyCAP, and that the school will offer supports to ensure that students matriculate in the postsecondary setting described in their plan.

Yes

**G. Confirm that the high school will develop a system for tracking the use of MyCAP.**

Yes

Upload any additional supporting documents here.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3 - ENHANCED STUDENT SUPPORTS**

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

**A. Identify the academic and nonacademic challenges that may arise for students in the proposed Early College program and list any data mechanisms that are currently, or will be, used for measuring, tracking, and/or evaluating these challenges. Indicate when the mechanism will be deployed during the student experience.**

A recurring academic challenge is the alignment of IHE and High School calendars. Given that, the courses will be run at WTHS during their daily bell schedule. This is slightly mitigated however; there are still challenges to overcome such as alignment of the withdrawal period and progress tracking. NECC requires all Early College faculty to report multiple times per semester on student progress to ensure that any student in need is receiving the proper support services; for example academic coaching to bolster student skills such as time management, on demand. The college uses EAB Navigate to track, intervene, and evaluate incidences and effectiveness of action taken to eliminate student risk factors. The interventions will be deployed for 11th and 12th students enrolled in courses.

For the 9th, 10th grade students, and 11th that may not have accessed into Early College, planning to enroll in the following academic year, a measurement tool will need to be created to adequately track support tools, progress, and overall success in migration to college readiness. Ultimately, for the students the challenge is one of navigating multiple academic transitions simultaneously—a difficult task for anyone!

Other challenges that layer onto the need to continuously track student progress and success are about building the appropriate support systems. For instance at NECC there are established academic tutoring centers, student coaching, and college and career advising at a student's fingertips. The students at WTHS will also require these support services. The student's challenge is one of time and how to access these support tools when they are enrolled daily in academic and shop programs and then transitioning to after school programming, rigorous co-op placements, and often external part-time jobs.

**B. Describe how the challenges you have specified will be addressed, specific to students in the proposed program; include an outline of potential supports, naming those that exist and those that need to be developed. Supports must address counseling, advising, and tutoring needs both at the high school and postsecondary levels. *Reliance on existing supports may not be sufficient for the needs of students in these programs, and applicants are encouraged to plan for deeper supports for EC (Early College) students.***

As referenced in Section A above all challenges are ultimately linked to clear and rapid communication about required academic and non-academic student concerns. The data mechanisms utilized are timed reporting, by NECC faculty, which are aligned with the appropriate timing within the academic calendar to ensure student success and support students at risk.

The value in creating the student alert system is creating a process for rapid communication across all levels that will ensure that student interventions are early and targeted, ultimately reducing the number of Failing and Withdrawals within the program. The college's office of PK12 is the primary dispersal group. Daily, any alert issued by an NECC faculty member will be communicated as follows by NECC: 1. To the high school EC coordinator and 2. To the appropriate student support area at NECC. Examples of student support services to be alerted at NECC are: The Care and Concern team (mental health), Academic Coaching (student study skills), Academic Tutoring, and Academic Advising. The WTHS EC coordinator will alert the following on case type dependent basis: Guidance, WTHS faculty, principals, and student's guardian. With NECC's PK12

Office and WTHS EC coordinator serving as intermediaries both institutions will be notified, react, reach out, and serve the students' needs quickly and appropriately.

This mechanism requires daily commitment to review and act by both institutions. At NECC which also hosts other Early College programs, this extensive student support model requires increased FT staff support.

Whittier has an extensive team of early college support personnel ready and prepared to assist with student support. A high school instructor is always assigned to early college students at WTHS to ensure they are successful in the classroom. Additionally, the EC coordinator at WTHS is available to provide the necessary resources and tools as well as all members of the WTHS guidance office.

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**C. List the contact information for the individual(s) responsible for student supports at both partnering entities, along with a corresponding description of the role. If the role requires staff to be hired, a proposed description should be included.**

K-12 Student Supports Contact Info : Director of Community Partnerships: Tia Roy troy@whittiertech.org

IHE Student Supports Contact Info : PK12 Executive Director: Marcy Yeager myeager@necc.mass.edu

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**D. Offer some preliminary thoughts about how staff will accommodate students who present behavioral or health and safety concerns, such that they can be included and successful in the program?**

Students in 9th and 10th who exhibit behavioral issues however, and who have expressed intent to enroll in Early College, will take the 10th grade preparatory course to ensure they understand the expectations of a college course at WTHS. All students enrolled in college level courses will have access to non-therapeutic counseling both from NECC and WTHS. Additionally student navigators and coaches from NECC can serve as a personal touchstone which often mitigates disruptive behavior at NECC.

The courses within the EC pathway at WTHS are all also delivered at NECC in both hybrid and online format. If a student presents health or behavior issues that prevent attendance a student could enroll in the online version and receive all the supports offered to all other Early College students at the college. Coaching and tutoring are available remotely.

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**Upload any additional supporting documents here.**

[NECC\\_Whittier\\_Student\\_Supports\\_Contact\\_Information.docx](#)

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## **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, for example, by providing opportunities for targeted workforce and career skills development, career counseling, and elements of experiential and workplace learning.*

**A. Describe how the proposed program will expose students to IHEs, including deeper exposure to many types of college level academic opportunities relevant to their IHE coursework and interests, and offer information about the progression of these over the four years of high school.**

During the two years students are earning college credits at NECC all students will have a myNECC account where they can access a program audit for their WTHS Early College Program. This program audit allows students to determine degree completion values for any degree offered at NECC. All WTHS students in Early College will have an opportunity to have a 1:1 academic planning session with NECC's academic advising center. NECC will also be providing information about how the Early College course credits also transfer to partnered institutions (all courses taught in the WTHS EC sequence are part of the Mass Transfer block). Students will learn about all Commonwealth Commitment options included two plus two pathways.

Additionally, through WTHS programming, students are provided with relevant information regarding college options throughout their time as a student. They are exposed to various college options through fairs, open houses, college guest speakers and presenters, etc.

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**B. Provide examples of IHE exposure, exploration and/or immersion activities that will be included in the program across the four years of high school.**

Initial exposure will start as early as the Fall of a student's 9th grade year and will progress through the Spring of 10th with regular campus visits to attend seminars, visit labs, and explore programs. Once enrolled in the program, students will be invited to campus for a welcome registration day with a campus tour and generation of student IDs.

Program orientation for students and families will occur on the Haverhill campus in the evenings before the 11th grade academic year commences. Throughout the two years of EC coursework at WTHS, students will have the opportunity to attend programs at NECC, only four miles away.

**C. Identify any relevant credentials that students may earn or prepare to attain via the IHE program.**

At present students solely taking the courses offered through the EC designation will not be earning an additional credential, however they will all have earned up to 25% of an Associate's degree at NECC. WTHS and NECC carefully mapped the courses offered to ensure they serve as degree requirements in as many programs as possible. Many of the students enrolled in the WTHS EC program will also be eligible for Articulated Credits and up to 15 credits through the Advanced Manufacturing Concurrent enrollment program. When combined, students could leave WTHS with 30-36 credits. NECC is prepared to focus administrative and faculty time on mapping curriculum to identify additional shop programs that might earn articulated credit or warrant a fully executed concurrent shop program. This will open opportunity for stackable credentials such as a medical assisting certificate at the time of high school graduation and the opportunity to continue at NECC or a transfer institution.

**D. Identify any area employers or workforce development boards who will potentially support connections between education and career in support of the proposed program(s).**

Northern Essex Community College serves as the operational manager of the MassHire Career Centers in the Merrimack Valley and serves as a primary resource for connections between education and career planning for Early College Programs. In addition to NECC/MassHire partnerships, Whittier also continuously works with the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board to enhance career awareness and support workforce preparation in the development to meet the needs of not only high school students, but also evening school students who are currently employed, underemployed, unemployed, displaced, veteran or incumbent workers, and students in college looking to further their careers. It is the mission of both Whittier Tech and NECC to consistently align its programming to the Regional Blueprint. Changing technology and increasing skills requirements of the workforce have placed a significant pressure on workforce development providers to constantly adapt to modern industry. An advisory board consistently informs what skills are needed to be taught in order for a student to be successful out in the workplace. Both Whittier and NECC will continue to build on our collective high quality and consistent results that we have previously had in working with our industry partners, our workforce investment board, and our partners in education to better support the skilled labor workforce while using their advice and knowledge base to create and modify our curriculum to meet the needs of our economy. We will actively work to provide our students with a greater understanding of concepts and technologies of the trade that are needed to be successful within our region and the Commonwealth overall.

**E. Identify any area employers that will support internships or capstones.**

Both institutions have a proven record of accomplishment of providing the workforce of the Merrimack Valley with outstanding educational programming. Programming is based on the recommendations made by advisory boards, local employers, the area WIB, economic reports, and training centers. Both ensure that they provide all stakeholders with the best educational experiences possible while ensuring that they are meeting the needs of not only the students who are currently employees, but also the unemployed, displaced, veteran, and/or incumbent workers. Employer partners know that when they hire a Whittier and/or NECC graduate they can be confident in the skills that the student will bring to their business. Whittier provides proven workforce solutions by creating pathways for high school students in cooperative education to gain valuable experience as apprentices and transition directly to the workforce upon graduation. Partners believe that the education that a student receives at Whittier is essential to be successful in the field. Employer partners have also stated that it is essential that they have an employee who has exceptional attention to detail while being able to use the latest technologies. Utilizing both the cooperative extension partners at Whittier and NECC's broad network of internship opportunities and the NECCLink career platform, every opportunity for career related capstones would be provided.

**Upload any additional supporting documents here.**

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5 - EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

*Designated programs should be a partnership between at least one institution of higher education and one public secondary school and/or district, and may include one or more employers. Partnerships should present evidence that the program is consistent with collective bargaining agreements and memoranda of understanding detailing the nature of governance, budget, sustainability, scheduling, respective responsibilities, and performance measures. Programs should be sufficient in size to capture economies of scale goals and to ensure long-term sustainability.*

### **A. Describe the proposed partnership between the secondary school and the IHE partner. Please detail the roles and responsibilities of each partner.**

The partnership between NECC and WTHS is connected across roles and all levels of leadership at both institutions. At NECC, Noemi Custodia-Lora, Ph.D. Vice President Lawrence Campus and Community Relations oversees all PK12 partnerships. Marcy Yeager, Executive Director of PK-12 Partnerships and International Studies at NECC will work closely with the high school principals and superintendent and Director of Community Partnerships, Tia Roy. The Assistant Director PK-12 Partnerships will handle the technical assistance, service agreements, site visits, and on-site program implementation and work directly with the Director of Community Partnerships to manage daily operations. Northern Essex will manage all course level operations once the academics are determined, however it should be noted that all program options will be made jointly. WTHS will assume responsibility for the student academic and career advising; however, NECC will support the high school through presentations, campus visits, and visiting scholars. In all areas, both parties are jointly assuming roles and responsibilities. This cross map of roles will be managed with monthly meetings with the WTHS high school principals, directors, and Executive Director at NECC; bi-weekly "check-up" meeting between the NECC staff and Early College coordinator, and routine faculty and guidance progress reports. During the monthly meetings, discussions are primarily about overall progress of students; changes in the high school academic curriculum, and how to align to NECC offering of courses; how to expand on the ongoing Early College Program; bi-weekly checkup meetings often lead to immediate interventions when academic or mental health issues arise.

NECC faculty will be reporting both academic and socio-emotional student concerns to the PK-12 Office through progress checks at required intervals as well as have the ability to "flag a student" at any time. The PK-12 office communicates all progress checks to the partner high schools and schedules student support interventions.

### **B. Identify the personnel at each partnering entity who have been or will be responsible for developing the MOU between the two partners that will be required in the Part B application for designation.**

K-12 Partner Contact Info: : Tia Roy troy@whittiertech.org

IHE Partner Contact Info: : Marcy Yeager myeager@necc.mass.edu

### **C. Describe how local collective bargaining/labor relations issues, where relevant, have been or will be addressed.**

NECC previously resolved a collective bargaining issue regarding concurrent delivery model and it was agreed that for vocational and technical high schools the technical/shop courses may be concurrently enrolled and all academic courses will be dual enrollment courses taught by a NECC professor following the NECC academic calendar.

### **D. Identify key costs associated with the program for both partners, including—but not limited to—per credit student support and student transportation. The partners must have a realistic plan to sustainably support a high quality program, and have identified a necessary funding structure to achieve that goal. Note that a budget will be required as an element in the Part B Application.**

Whittier and NECC Institutional Operational Costs:

- Course tuition:\$110/credit with 6 credits/year per student. Anticipated Enrollment 66.
- Course Materials: \$25/credit (average).
- Transportation: \$4,000 per year (estimating 20 campus visits per academic year)
- Administrative Salary: NECC PK12 Office Staff ( NECC budget and grant funded) and WTHS Director of Community Partnerships (High School District funded)

- Academic Student Support resources (ex Tutors, Coaching) – funded by NECC and grant support.
- Assessment: \$16/student billed to K12 partner

The Early College tuition covers the cost of the course only and does not support college overhead or administrative salary. Those salaries are funded by NECC. The tuition is billed by total credit hours to the high school and WTHS has made provisions to fund 12 credits over two years for students entering the Early College program. In year one with 66 students anticipated to enroll the program cost would be: \$43,560 and for Year 2 with an anticipated 99 student enrolled total program costs would be \$65,340. Whenever possible NECC will maximize grant funds to support enrollment in WTHS EC courses, however, for sustainability purposes WTHS has built the funds into annual budgets.

To minimize the variable costs such as transportation and course materials Northern Essex has committed to creating an EC faculty professional development program to encourage the community of faculty to adopt Open Educational Resources and common textbooks. Both NECC and WTHS have agreed to be open about available grant resources that will support these costs.

One of the larger institutional costs are student support services. At present NECC absorbs the percent of early college cost per area into the overall operating budget for that specific program area. As Early College programs increase at NECC this is becoming a larger percent and the college is reviewing the funding model to maintain programming sustainably. The college does not intend to place additional service fees on the high school.

Grant funding awarded for an NECC/WTHS Early College Designation would be dedicated to overall curriculum alignment project between the two schools, dominantly in ELA and Mathematics but including other disciplines as needed. Additionally funds will support development of an alternative to the Accuplacer for assessment purposes. These large single investments will reduce annual assessment charges and by aligning curriculum support students in appropriate course placement therefore potentially reducing support service cost.

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**E. Upload a letter of intent to partner identifying leadership empowered to make decisions and outlining how the institutions will be fully integrated partners in the program. *This letter must be signed by both the K-12 superintendent and the Institution of Higher Education partner.***

[NECC\\_Whittier\\_Regional\\_Letter\\_of\\_Intent\\_EC\\_Part\\_A.pdf](#)

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**Upload any additional supporting documents here.**

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