



Fredericksburg ISD

Early College High School
Handbook



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Acknowledgement Form

Students and parents must sign the handbook acknowledgement form in order to participate in Early College High School. Acknowledgement forms are expected to be completed every year a student is in the program.

Admission Policy

Fredericksburg Early College High School provides students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education the opportunity to earn 60 college credits and their associate's degree at no cost. The program must target students from underrepresented backgrounds, however, students of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply for admission. In accordance with Texas Education Agency guidelines, enrollment decisions shall not be based on test scores, student discipline, teacher recommendations, essays, grade point average, or other criteria that create barriers for student enrollment. Students must be enrolled in the Fredericksburg Independent School District to apply. To be considered for enrollment, incoming 9th grade students must complete the Early College High School application and submit it before the application deadline. Students may not make initial entry to the ECHS at any other time unless they transfer from an Early College High School in another district.

Application

Students must complete the Early College High School application to be considered for admission to the program. As part of the application process, students are also required to participate in an interview with ECHS staff and attend an orientation meeting with a parent or guardian.

Application - Weighted Lottery Procedures

In the event we receive more applications for student participation than we can accommodate, a lottery will be utilized to determine who is admitted. The lottery is weighted, and targets a population of students that closely mirrors that of the district. Students who are not selected during the lottery are placed on a waiting list. Vacancies that occur after the lottery will be filled from the waiting list.

Attendance

Students in the ECHS program are expected to be in class every day. Regular attendance is a crucial component of student success in this environment, particularly in college-level courses. High school courses will adhere to FISD compulsory attendance policies. Poor attendance at the college level can result in a Director or Professor-initiated drop from a course. Students with poor attendance risk failing classes and eventual dismissal from the program. Except in unforeseen and unpreventable (extenuating) circumstances, students must not miss



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their college course without prior approval of the professor and ECHS counselor. Failure to plan or prepare is not an extenuating circumstance.

Class Rank & Dual Credit Implications

Students and parents should be aware that all dual credit courses are weighted. The complete list of weighted courses offered at Fredericksburg High School can be found in the FHS course guide. Weighted courses are also indicated on the ECHS crosswalk for reference.

Northeast Lakeview College Campus

Students taking dual credit courses from Northeast Lakeview College are able to access the facilities and resources available to face-to-face and online college students. Students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all times in accordance with the FISD Student Code of Conduct.

Cohort Meetings

Parental support is crucial to the overall success of each student in the program. As a result, ECHS meetings are **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** for both parents and students. Parent meetings will be scheduled periodically to allow stakeholders the opportunity to network with other families in the program, provide updates, and to give families a forum to ask questions and express concerns. If scheduling conflicts occur, a face-to-face meeting should be scheduled to ensure receipt of important program updates and information. Additional parent meetings will be scheduled as needed to address student concerns or issues. Attendance is required for these meetings as well to ensure action plans are in place and effective communication is established.

Communication

ECHS staff will communicate to students and parents primarily by telephone and email. Communication will also occur through Blackboard, Social Media, cohort meetings, and the Early College High School website. Although there is an expectation that staff communicate with parents, they are not expected to contact every individual on the student's emergency contact list. Typically, the first person contacted is the name that appears first on the student's registration list. If a parent/guardian does not wish for a specific person to be contacted on the list, they will need to update the student's registration information. Additionally, if registration information (email, phone number, primary contact, secondary contact, etc.) is incorrect, the parent/guardian is responsible for making the necessary updates to ensure communication is being received.



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College Calendar

Although college courses are available during the school day, they follow college meeting requirements. Courses are designed to fit within a school semester and during a student's class period or longer. Students must follow the college calendar and attend their college classes as scheduled regardless of high school activities, modified schedules, early releases, or student holidays unless worked out with the professor and ECHS Campus Principal in advance. ECHS students understand that some high school holidays are not holidays at the college. For example, if the high school is on holiday for Columbus Day and the college is not, the students will need to attend their college classes. Spring break dates for Northeast Lakeview College may differ from FISDs spring break. High school buses will not run on days like these, so personal transportation may be required. Calendar information will be available on the Early College High School website. Additional information will be sent out via Blackboard phone blast to parents, and through Blackboard to students throughout the year.

College Courses

The high school selects the college courses to be offered to ECHS students and also determines which courses can be used for high school graduation credit according to district and state policies. Courses vary by semester and are subject to change. The current list of college courses can be viewed online on the ECHS webpage or obtained from the ECHS counselor. Students must meet college course prerequisites in order to enroll in college classes. Although the ultimate goal of the ECHS program is for students to earn an associate's degree, students are not guaranteed this outcome. Systems have been designed to support students in reaching this goal; however, the burden of responsibility and performance lies with the student. Additionally, it is important to note that the first priority of the ECHS program is to ensure students receive their high school diploma. If at any time a student is in jeopardy of not earning their high school diploma, the student's schedule may be adjusted to make sure high school graduation is prioritized. This may include removal from dual credit courses or suspension from participation in the program. Some of the scenarios where a high school diploma is considered to be at-risk include, but are not limited to, when a student has: failed a required course, lost credit in a course due to attendance, failed to meet standard on a required EOC exam, etc. In this scenario, the ECHS campus leadership is responsible for making the best decision for the student regarding program participation.

College Grades

Students must maintain a 67% Passing Rate and a 2.0 GPA. Students dropping below this rate risk not being eligible for financial aid from colleges in the future. Northeast Lakeview professors are not always FISD employees and are not subject to FISD policies concerning attendance and grades. When possible, FISD will enlist qualified high school teachers to become adjunct Northeast Lakeview College staff members for each dual credit course. College professors do not issue six weeks or progress report grades; they issue academic alerts to high school staff, as needed. Professors issue a final grade at the end of the college semester. Colleges use a 7 letter grade system which is converted by FISD as follows: A= 95, B=85, C=75, D=70, F=65 (if



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applicable, this conversion will also be used for transfer grades when students withdraw from a course.

MEET ALL THREE STANDARDS TO BE ELIGIBLE:

Your Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) status is determined when you apply for financial aid. It is based on all previous academic history. Once you receive aid, your academic progress is evaluated at the end of every semester.

Three Standards to Make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Status

- Grade Point Average - Maintain a cumulative 2.0 or higher GPA for NLC classes.
- Course Completion - Successfully complete 67% of attempted credits. For example: If you enrolled in 12 credits but you withdrew (W) from 6 credits, you have only completed 50% of your attempted credits.
- Degree Progress - Demonstrate progress toward finishing your program of study within a 150% maximum time frame. For example: if you seek an associate degree requiring 60 credits, complete the degree within 90 attempted credits.

College Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. I understand that as a college student only my child has access to his/her college records, including current course progress and attendance. I may not contact a college professor to obtain this information but must instead work with my child, high school counselor, and college advisor to obtain/provide any information that may assist.

Commitment

Students in the ECHS program are making a 4-year commitment to earning college credit. Although situations will arise that make continued enrollment in the program difficult, freshman students are expected to remain in the program and participate to the extent possible in dual credit enrollment.

Communication Plan

In an effort to reach our target audience, events will be planned throughout the year to engage stakeholders and disseminate information about the Early College High School program. Students, parents, and community members will be able to participate in meetings and school events with ECHS staff. Communication with school board members will take place during school board meetings as requested where program updates and data will be reviewed. Additionally, regularly scheduled meetings will be held between the IHE and the ECHS to ensure program goals are being met and student performance is being monitored.



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Discipline & Behavior Expectations

Fredericksburg Early College High School students are expected to follow the FISD Student Code of Conduct at all times, including when they are participating in NLC/ECHS activities at the NLC campus. Students are aware that NLC has their own policies and expectations separate from that of FISD and have the authority to administer consequences to students independent from the high school campus.

Dropping / Withdrawing From Courses

Students may drop college courses by meeting with the ECHS Counselor before the first day of college classes. Students may follow the same procedure to withdraw from courses already in progress by the published college withdrawal deadline. Meeting with the ECHS Counselor is MANDATORY before dropping any course and the student must notify the ECHS Campus Principal in writing. This may be done via email or in other written form. A drop will not appear on a college transcript. A withdrawal will appear as a W with no grade impact on the college transcript. Students will be governed by the same institutional and Federal Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards as any traditional college student and must maintain a 2.0 College GPA and 67% completion rate to be eligible for financial aid. The ECHS or FHS counselor will determine the appropriate schedule change or options for the student to earn the necessary high school credit. If a student withdraws from a course already in session, a transferable grade will be assigned according to the high school college course grade conversion (if applicable). Students may also be withdrawn from college courses by their professor and/or ECHS counselor for excessive absences, lack of academic progress, or failure to adhere to course and college policies.

Fredericksburg ISD will pay for one re-take of a failed ECHS course throughout the entirety of time the student is in the program. If the student has more than one failed class/attempt, it will become the family's responsibility to pay the tuition for the course.

EDUC1300: Effective Strategies For College Success

This is the first college course students take in the Early College High School program. In order to stay on track for the associate's degree, students need to successfully complete the course with a 70% or above by the end of their sophomore year. Historically, students who have failed to pass this course have struggled in the program overall. If a student fails the class they will be able to retake the course. If a student fails the class a second time, they will not be able to move forward in the program.

Enrollment Status

Students must meet TSI requirements in order to enroll in junior-level classes at Northeast Lakeview College. Although TSIA2 scores do not prohibit students from joining the ECHS program, they do play a significant role in the student's ability to complete the 4-year graduation plan and subsequent college crosswalk. Students who are unable to pass the TSIA2 ELAR and Math test by the end of their sophomore year will remain in the program and continue receiving support. Students are expected to continue studying for the TSIA2 test.



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Students are also expected to sign up and register for every available TSIA2 testing opportunity scheduled at the high school until they are able to earn a passing score. Students who fail to prepare and/or register for future tests are subject to being dismissed from the program. Note: Students who do not start their first college class by the second semester of their 10th grade year will not be able to earn their associate's degree through the ECHS program.

ECHS Model

School-Within-School (SWS) - A subset of students on the campus are enrolled in grades 9-12 and are enrolled in ECHS.

Exit Meeting

The student and his/her parents must meet with the ECHS Campus Principal before exiting the program. The meeting is mandatory and is intended to make sure all stakeholders are aware of the options available to the student.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students in Early College High School are able to participate in school-sponsored extracurricular activities while enrolled in the program. With this understanding, conflicts may arise between the high school master schedule and the NLC schedule that are unavoidable. In this event, ECHS staff will work with students and parents to reach a comparable solution, but can not guarantee a favorable outcome if program guidelines and norms are compromised.

Special Education / 504 Students

Student accessibility services (SAS) are available for college students that qualify. If a course is being taught by an adjunct professor who is also employed by FISSD, then 504 accommodations are automatically available. If the professor is an employee of NLC, then it is the responsibility of the student to request these services.

Services provided are at the discretion of the college and may not reflect past high school services. Requests for accommodations must be made at the SAS department on the college campus. In order for a student to receive services from the college, all meetings and paperwork must be completed prior to classes starting. Please visit the following website for more information:

<https://www.alamo.edu/nlc/admissions--aid/specific-populations/SAS/>.

Student Recruitment

Early College High School is intended for students who are at risk of dropping out of school as defined by the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and who might not otherwise go to college. Early College staff will focus recruitment efforts on subpopulations of students that are at-risk and economically



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disadvantaged. Additional focus will be placed on recruiting students that are historically underrepresented in college enrollment. Although recruitment efforts will focus on students meeting the above criteria, all students enrolled in FISD are able to take advantage of the program and have equal access to apply.

Summer Bridge

Students that submit an application and are accepted into the Early College High School program as incoming 9th graders are required to attend summer bridge. The purpose of this program is to help students transition from middle school to the high school where they will be taking both high school and college classes. Special focus will be placed on TSIA2 Reading and Writing preparation as well as a variety of other skills that are essential to college success like time management, goal setting, and test-taking strategies. Students will also participate in team building activities and visit the college campus when possible. Students not able to attend summer bridge must contact the ECHS campus counselor and/or principal directly and without doing so may be subject to dismissal from the program at the discretion of ECHS administration.

Technology

Fredericksburg High School is a one-to-one campus that affords every student the opportunity to check out and use a Dell Laptop/Chromebook. Students in Early College High School are required to take advantage of this program if they don't already have access to a personal device. Some NLC professors require students to use personal technology for their course. Additionally, seniors will have the opportunity to check out a graphing calculator for their college math course. Students will be required to reimburse the school for lost, stolen or damaged calculators at the purchase price.

Texas Success Initiative (TSI)

Students wanting to take dual credit courses must take and pass the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. Before taking the TSI Assessment (TSIA2), students must participate in a Pre-Assessment Activity (PAA). The college or university where students take the test is required to provide the Pre-Assessment Activity as well as document student participation. It is a requirement that students complete the PAA before taking the test. The PAA includes an explanation of the importance of the TSIA2 and how the assessment works, practice test questions and feedback, an explanation of developmental education options, and information on campus and community resources that will help students succeed in college. Fredericksburg High School is a TSI site and regularly scheduled tests take place throughout the year during school, after school, and on the weekends. For more information regarding TSI testing, please visit the Early College High School website. The TSIA2 is composed of two sections; Integrated Reading & Writing (ELAR), and Math. Students must earn a minimum passing score on each section of the test to be considered TSI complete. TSIA2 ELAR College Ready Scores are 945 - 990 and essay 5 - 8 OR, 910 - 944, and diagnostic level 5 - 6, and essay 5 - 8. TSIA2 Math College Ready Scores are 950 - 990 OR, 910 - 949, and diagnostic level 6.



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TSI Retesting & Remediation

Students that need to pass one or more sections of the TSI test are expected to proactively register for testing opportunities as they become available. Students are expected to follow all testing procedures and expectations, including remediation plans in order to be eligible for retesting.

Textbooks

All necessary college textbooks are purchased by the school district and provided to your child free of charge. Students are required to return textbooks after the semester for which they were purchased comes to an end. Students will be required to reimburse the school for lost, stolen or damaged textbooks at the purchase price. Additionally, students may not receive new textbooks until they return books from the previous semester or pay outstanding fines.

Transfer Students

Students transferring in from another school district cannot apply for Early College High School until they are officially registered. Once a student registers, they will have to complete the application process to be eligible to join the program. Preference will be given to those students who were previously enrolled in an Early College High School in the prior district.



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APPENDIX A: ECHS STUDENT/PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

In support of my student's college and career goals, I hereby grant permission for them to be advised for, and enrolled into the appropriate high school and college courses, as determined by the high school counselor and college advisor. I understand that my child may be enrolled in both high school and college credit courses, and must abide by all high school and college policies in order to receive credit. I further acknowledge that success in college courses requires a serious time and effort commitment on my child's part and that they must utilize the learning resources available at the high school and college campus in order to be successful. College professors are not employed by FISD and may or may not alter or modify course content for high school students, which may at times contain controversial topics. Please sign below to acknowledge your understanding and agreement to the following.

- 1) I understand it is my responsibility to read and review the content, requirements and expectations outlined in the Early College High School Student & Parent Handbook.
- 2) I understand if I have questions at any time regarding the Early College High School Student/Parent handbook, I will consult with ECHS campus staff for clarification.
- 3) I understand the contents of the Early College High School Student & Parent Handbook are subject to change.
- 4) I acknowledge it is my responsibility to stay informed of policy and procedure revisions to the Early College High School Student & Parent Handbook, which will be posted on the Early College High School website.
- 5) I understand students are subject to the FISD Student Code of Conduct, as well as the Northeast Lakeview College Student Code of Conduct.
- 6) I understand that students are responsible for returning textbooks in good condition and will be charged in the event they are lost or damaged.
- 7) I understand college professors are not employed by FISD and may or may not alter or modify course content for high school students, which could at times contain controversial topics.
- 8) I understand that my student needs to maintain Satisfactory Academic Performance (cumulative 2.0 GPA or higher & complete 67% of attempted credits) in order to receive and/or keep financial aid in college.

Parent Name (Print)

Parent Signature

Date

Student Name (Print)

Student Signature

Date