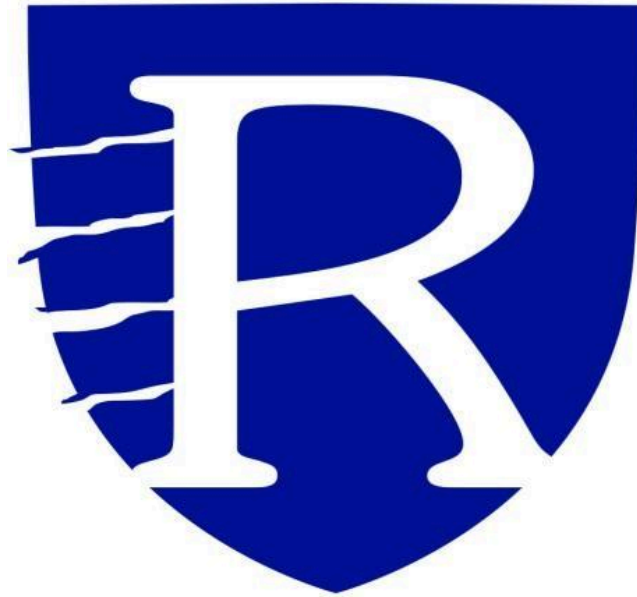


ROAR



ACADEMY

Wharton ISD | WCJC

2024-2025

Handbook

Vision

All students will progress academically and intellectually and will have success for today and be prepared for tomorrow.

Mission

The ROAR Academy is a student centered learning community committed to providing an advanced educational experience that prepares students for success in college, career and life.

Core Values

- High expectations for all
- Excellence in teaching and learning
- Respect for the individual
- Resources to support student needs
- Shared ownership and commitment

Early College High School (ROAR) Administration

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Alyshia Owens | Campus Principal |
| Sandra Bonner | Assistant Principal |
| Myrna Hodge | Counselor |
| Lynn Shaver | Counselor |
| Ryan Quinn | College & Career Advisor |

The ROAR Academy handbook is meant to provide information to students and parents about the expectations. All students are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures that are discussed in the ROAR and the WHS handbook and student code of conduct. Please refer to the handbook of the campus that applies to the question you have in regards to a policy. Should you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the administrator for your child’s grade level and they will be more than happy to assist you. Please call 979.532.6800 and ask to speak to an administrator for that grade level.

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ADMISSION AND INDUCTION

Students whose applications have been accepted as incoming 9th graders are considered to be in Contingent Status until all college-readiness conditions have been met. In order to formally continue onto college-level courses and secure Cohort status, students must meet the following requirements by December 15th of their freshman year:

- Secure program acceptance through ROAR Academy application process
- Maintain the high standard of academic success (3.0 GPA or higher)
- Maintain 90% attendance rate
- Refrain from behavioral incidents resulting in ISS, OSS, or DAEP placement
- Demonstrate college readiness by:
 - Scoring a 351+ on the Reading portion of TSI
 - Scoring a 4 on the Writing portion of TSI

Each of these factors will be monitored and evaluated through the fall semester of the 9th grade year. At that time, admitted students will be enrolled and begin their first WCJC course. In addition, ROAR students must also pass the Mathematics portion of TSI by December 15th of their junior year.

ADMISSION POLICY

ROAR Academy was established in 2014-15 as a gateway for traditionally underserved students to complete an associate degree while earning a high school diploma at Wharton High School. It allows students least likely to attend college an opportunity to receive both a high school diploma and either an associate degree or at least 60 credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree. The ROAR Academy currently partners with Wharton County Community College to offer students dual credit college courses. This unique school is specifically designed to provide students the opportunity to begin college during the second semester of their ninth grade year. This school redefines the typical comprehensive high school experience by providing a small school setting within the regular high school. This program enables students to progress in four years, beginning in the ninth grade, through the first two years of college, earning both their distinguished high school diploma and an Associate of Arts or 60 hours toward a baccalaureate degree.

ATTENDANCE

Wharton Early College High School (ROAR) has established program culture and degree plans that serve as a vehicle for rigorous teaching and learning. Attendance is very important in success in the ROAR Academy environment. It is particularly important in every college course. If a student misses any instruction, he/she is still responsible for the learning that took place. High school courses will adhere to the WISD compulsory attendance policies. The ROAR Academy expects students to miss no more than three (3) class meets in college level courses. This number is subject to be fewer depending on the independent requirements of the course professor. Poor attendance at the college level can result in a Director-initiated drop or a professor-initiated drop. Work in both high school and college classes is expected to be turned in regardless of the student's absence.

COHORT STATUS

Cohort status will be evaluated at the conclusion of each semester. In order to maintain Cohort Status in ROAR, each student must continuously meet the below criteria:

- Minimum semester GPA of 3.0 in high school classes
- Minimum semester GPA of 2.67 in dual credit courses
- 90% attendance in each high school class (calculated by period)
- No more than one disciplinary referral in a single semester

CHARACTER

As a student in the ROAR Academy, you represent the core values of the program, Wharton County Junior College and Wharton Independent School District. The character of ROAR students is expected to be above reproach. Any violation of the Student Code of Conduct or student expectations will not be tolerated and can have consequences that impact participation in the ROAR Academy. It is important that both parents and students understand that ROAR is an opt-in program. By choosing to participate in the pursuit of an associate degree through ROAR, the student is simultaneously choosing to exemplify standards of character that contribute positively to program culture and reputation.

COMMUNICATION

Students' dual credit grades will be communicated consistently throughout the semester using the WHS Course Progress Guide. Parents are highly encouraged to monitor the 3rd and 6th week progress reports and 9-week report card issued by Wharton High School. Student grades can also be monitored in the parent portal of TxEIS for their high school courses. Students are responsible for monitoring their academic progress at WCJC.

DEGREE PATHWAY

Students who are enrolled in ROAR are given the opportunity to obtain an Associate degree through a combination of dual credit courses and credit by exam. Courses are scheduled during the school year as well as possible summer courses. Although the ROAR goal is acquisition of the associate degree, students are not guaranteed this outcome. Wharton Early College High School has designed several systems of support to propel students toward their program goal; however, the burden of responsibility and performance lies with the student.

It is important to note that students' receipt of a high school diploma will always be the first priority of ROAR. If at any time earning a high school diploma is in jeopardy, the student's schedule may be adjusted to make sure earning a high school diploma 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 required End-of-Course exams, etc.

DISCIPLINE

Wharton Early College Students are expected to follow all student expectations of behaviors outlined by Wharton Independent School District and Wharton County Junior College. This includes the WISD Student Code of Conduct, WHS Student/Parent Handbook, and any campus or district administrative directives regarding student discipline expectations. Students cannot attend Wharton County Junior College classes while actively serving an ISS and/or DAEP placements.

The purpose of discipline is to help the student develop increasing responsibility for the independent control of his/her own behavior while creating an atmosphere which will develop a mutual respect for each individual's rights. To this end, the Wharton Independent School District firmly believes that to have an effective educational system for all students, it is necessary that proper behavior must be maintained in the classrooms, in the school buildings, on school grounds, and on school buses. The responsible behavior should continue between school and home.

The circumstances requiring discipline will determine the corrective strategies used. These may range from teacher guidance and parental awareness to suspension.

It is the intent of the Early College High School discipline plan to enhance the WISD plan. It is a privilege to attend the ROAR Academy, not a right.

Rules

- Be respectful
- Be prepared
- Follow directions
- Abide by the WISD and the ROAR Academy Student Code of Conduct

Consequences

- Verbal Warning
- Conference with Student
- Conference with Student and AP
- Conference with Student, Parent and AP
- Referral to the AP
- Possible DAEP Placement or Expelled from the ROAR Academy

Discipline in college courses follows the WCJC policies.

The ROAR Academy guidelines for administering discipline can be found in the pamphlet, *WISD Student Code of Conduct* that is online at www.whartonisd.org under the Parents or Students section. Parents and students are asked to pay special attention to the sections: "Student Offenses and Consequences" and "Unexcused Absences".

DISMISSAL PROTOCOL

Warning

- Failing two WHS classes at three-week progress report
- Failing one WHS class at the end of a six-week cycle
- Failing a college class Midterm of a college course
- Any discipline referral resulting ISS placement (in a single semester)

(Student-Parent-Administrator conference required)

Probation

- Failing a WHS class for the second consecutive six-week cycle
- Failing two or more WHS classes at the end of a six-week cycle
- Earning a D, F, I or W at the end of a semester in any college course
- Six (6) or more absences in a single class period for the semester
- Any student performance resulting in a college- or professor-initiated drop from a course
- At the end of any semester in which the student is on WCJC Academic Warning and/or the college GPA is less than 2.67

- Any discipline referral resulting in a second ISS (in a single semester)
- Any discipline referral resulting in OSS

(Student placed on ROAR Probation Contract)

Suspension

- Failing one or more WHS courses based on semester average
- Loss of credit in part A or Part B of a course as a result of attendance (less than 90% attendance in a class period)
- Third six-week cycle on academic probation for performance in WHS classes
- Failure to regain satisfactory academic progress in a college course by census day of the semester following academic probation
- A total of three or more discipline incidents in a single school year

(Student Exited from the ROAR program)

Students who have not earned credits for their core classes will not be allowed to enroll in a college course. Once a student reaches the level of suspension, he/she will be exited from the ROAR program. The ROAR Steering Committee reserves the right at any time to modify the above-mentioned consequences up to removal (exiting) a student from the program.

DROP/FAILURE OF A WCJC CLASS

If a student drops or fails a WCJC course, the following are the consequences:

- Drops for non-attendance may result in removal from ROAR for the subsequent semester. Students are allowed up to two weeks worth of absences before being dropped from class.
- Drops or failures of a course because of lack of academic success
 - All students must maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA with WCJC. Students that move to the Academic Suspension list with WCJC will not be able to return to WCJC for the remainder of their high school career.
 - Current WCJC Freshmen and Sophomores
 - Freshmen who do not pass their Ed Psy course will be subject to enrollment review.
 - Sophomores who do not pass their college classes will be subject to enrollment review.
 - Current WHS Juniors
 - Students must not fail (letter grade below at 70) more than one course per semester in order to remain in the ROAR Academy.
 - Current WHS Seniors
 - Students must pass ENGL 1301 to remain in the ROAR Academy.
 - Students must not fail (letter grade below a 70) more than one course during the fall semester in order to remain in the ROAR Academy.

- In order to drop a WCJC course, students must follow the drop procedures available from the WHS/ROAR Academy counselor (Mrs. Raybon). In order to drop a WCJC course, a student must meet the following criteria:
 - Students must have no more than one absence in the course for which they are requesting to drop.
 - Students must have turned in all assignments (no missing assignments).
 - Students must have met with their instructor during office hours at least three times, and these meetings are documented.
- Beginning with the 2020 cohort, students will be allowed to drop no more than one course (this includes drops for non-attendance) throughout the duration of their junior and senior year. The next time a drop is processed; the student will drop all of their remaining courses and will withdraw from the ROAR Academy for the subsequent semester.

For students who may have extraordinary circumstances, these will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the WHS administration.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

It is very important for the school to have current home, work, and emergency telephone numbers. These numbers are necessary in case a child becomes ill, is injured, or any other emergency occurs during the day. We also use the School Messenger call out system to distribute important school information. If these phone numbers change during the year, parents should contact the school immediately so that their child’s emergency information may be updated. Students may be released only to those listed on the registration card.

ENROLLMENT IN THE ROAR ACADEMY

By choosing admission to ROAR, students and families are making a serious commitment to become part of our school community. Because we can only enroll a limited number of students each year, students who are fortunate enough to get a spot must be willing to take advantage of that opportunity. Because Early College becomes the students’ base high school assignment, any change to that assignment requires a team meeting with the student, parents, teachers, counselors, and the principal. We do recognize that students may determine that this is not the best fit for them, and removal from the ROAR Academy will be considered if the team determines that it is in the best interest of the student.

EXPECTATIONS

A bar of very high expectations has been set for the students of Wharton High School ROAR Academy. These expectations extend to our students’ character, academics, attendance, and discipline. Learning cannot take place in a college setting without developing self-discipline and self-advocacy. It is also critical that students acquire the soft skills necessary to be successful in any social context – respect, professionalism, punctuality, communication, as well as compliance with standards and policies.

GRADE CLASSIFICATION

After the ninth grade, students are classified according to the number of credits earned toward graduation. Classification is determined at the beginning of the school year (as of the first day of school).

| <u>Credits Earned</u> | <u>Classification</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 6-11.5 | Grade 10 (Sophomore) |
| 12-17.5 | Grade 11 (Junior) |
| 18+ | Grade 12 (Senior) |

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Parents are highly encouraged to follow the hierarchy of escalation when addressing student concerns. This process should be followed out of respect for all parties and to ensure orderly resolution of concerns. Any issue or concern should begin with the most base-level entity involved, unless an act of unethical behavior or a crime is being reported. For example:

- Concern with a student’s academic progress should begin with contacting the classroom teacher.
- Concern with a student’s schedule or graduation requirements should begin with contacting the counselor.
- Concern with student attendance, or program participation should begin with the ROAR Counselor, Mrs. Raybon or the ECHS Administrator, Mrs. Rath.

Order of Escalation

- Teacher
- Counselor – Donna Raybon
- CTE & ECHS Administrator, - Monica Rath
- Wharton High School Principal – Richard Chandler
- District Administration – Monica Rath

The overarching mission of Wharton Early College High School is student success. Please provide ROAR many opportunities to mitigate concerns at the lowest level first.

LIBRARY POLICY USE FOR STUDENTS

Students are required to have a visible, valid WISD ID or temporary ID card to use the library. The library is open to students from 8:00 until 4:00 on school days. Students should look at the WHS Library Web Page, located at <http://whartonisd.net/page/whslib-library-Home> for more information about the library and their rules. In addition, information can be found on our WISD handbook on the WHS webpage.

REPORT CARDS / PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Report cards or progress reports with each student’s grades and absences in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every three weeks. If the student receives a grade lower than 70 in any class or subject during a grading period, the parent is encouraged to schedule a conference with the teacher of that class or subject. Teachers follow grading guidelines approved by the Principal/Superintendent that have been designed to reflect each student’s academic achievement for the grading period, semester, or course. State law provides that a test or course grade issued by a teacher cannot be changed unless the Board determines that the grade was arbitrary or contains an error, or that the teacher did not follow the District’s grading guidelines.

Questions about grade calculation should first be discussed with the teacher; if the question is not resolved, the student or parent may request a conference with the supervisor of the teacher or the Principal. Parents/guardians have access to their student’s grades on Ascender. Please contact 979-532-6800 if you have any questions about the online grade access.

ROAR ACADEMY ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty in ROAR courses will follow the WISD policy. College courses follow WCJC policy. [Early College High School Mastery and Tutoring Procedures](#)

Mastery is defined as a score of 70% for all WHS students. Students who do not achieve mastery will be expected to attend tutoring for remediation to practice concepts until maximum progress is demonstrated. Students will be allowed ten school days to achieve mastery once the grade is posted. Parents will be notified of the failure to meet mastery. Students will not be excused from subsequent concepts or assignments taught during the time period in which they are attempting to master a concept previously taught.

- Students lacking mastery will be required to attend tutoring. Parents will be notified.
- The original grade will be posted; however, it may be updated to reflect the student's new level of understanding.
- Tutoring is only for high school courses. Tutoring for WCJC courses may be available through the college. Students can make appointments with their instructor. WCJC also has a Tutoring Center online through Smarthinking.

TEXTBOOK POLICY:

Students must return textbooks to their campus on the last day of school. A hold will be placed on the student schedule and transcript until the books are returned. If books are damaged, it will be the student's responsibility to pay for the damages.

WHARTON HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

All students will be trained in academic honesty in AVID and verified through an academic honesty quiz at the beginning of the year. Should students be found academically dishonest in any class, the following measures will apply:

- Teacher notifies parent/guardian
- A zero is recorded in the gradebook per the ten-school day mastery policy
- Student must complete a comparable assignment in a monitored setting
- The grade will be updated upon completion of the comparable assignment

WHARTON ISD ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education— to benefit from each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student's mastery of subject matter and concepts; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Texas State Law requires students to attend school until their 18th birthday. Daily attendance is very important. Failure to attend school the required amount of time could result in the loss of credit, legal action, and / or dismissal from school. It is the responsibility of the student and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) to ensure that attendance rules are followed.

An attempt will be made to notify the parents of high school students, by telephone on a daily basis, when their student is absent from school, regardless of the nature of the absence. Attendance personnel are not responsible for incorrect telephone numbers or addresses.

WHARTON ISD MOBILE COMPUTING DEVICE GUIDELINES

The individual use of mobile devices is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for college and the workplace. The result is increased learning from the continuous dynamic interaction among students, educators, parents, and the extended community. Technology immersion does not diminish the role of the teacher. To

the contrary, it transforms the teacher from a director of learning to a facilitator of learning, which continues beyond the school day.

The following guidelines apply to all mobile computing devices issued to students by Wharton Independent School District, including netbooks, laptops, iPads, iPods and any other device considered by the District to be a computing device. The devices remain the property of Wharton ISD, and all users will follow the Student Technology User Agreement in the student handbook. Students can also reference the ROAR Electronic Device Chromebook Agreement.

Device Checkout and Check-in

The student devices will be issued during the Summer Bridge or 1st week of school. Devices and accessories including charging cords and cases will be returned before the last day of school. If a student graduates early, withdraws, is suspended or expelled, or transfers out of the Wharton Independent School District campus issuing the device before the end of the school year, the device will be returned on the last day of the student's attendance at that campus.

A student who does not return the device will face disciplinary and legal action in accordance with the Wharton ISD Student Technology User Agreement.

Taking Care of Your Device

Each school-issued computing device is intended for use at school every day. Students are responsible to bring their device to all classes unless specifically instructed not to do so by a teacher.

General Precautions

Use only a soft, dry, clean cloth to clean the screen. Never use cleansers of any kind.

- Charge the device's battery every night to ensure a full charge for school.
- Insert/remove cords and cables carefully to prevent damage.
- Do not personalize the hardware including writing, drawing, or placing stickers/labels on it that are not the property of the Wharton Independent School District.
- Never leave the device unsupervised or in an unlocked area or vehicle.
- Turn in devices that are broken or fail to work properly to the campus for evaluation as soon as possible.
- Computing devices should only be used in a place where the temperature is between 32° and 95°F. Low or high temperature conditions might temporarily shorten battery life or cause the device to stop working properly.
- Do not leave the device in a car in order to avoid extreme temperatures and chance of theft.

Carrying the Devices

The backpacks and/or carrying cases have sufficient padding to protect the device from normal treatment and provide a suitable means for carrying it within the school.

- Always use the backpack with the device when carrying it.
- Avoid placing the device where it will have pressure and weight on it.

Screen Care

The screens on any device can be damaged if subject to rough treatment. They are particularly sensitive to pressure on the screen.

- Do not lean on the top of the device's case when it is closed.
- Do not place anything on or near the device that could put pressure on the screen.
- Do not place anything in the carrying case with the device that could press on the screen or cover.
- Do not bump the device against hard areas such as walls, car doors, floors, or other hard areas as it will break the screen.

Screensavers and Background Photos

- Personalize your school-issued device through copyright –free background photos or screensavers.
- Do not use images of weapons, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, alcohol, drugs, or gang- related symbols as a background photo or screensaver.

Home Internet Access

Students are allowed to access wireless networks at the parent’s discretion on the school-issued device. Note that all access via non-WISD networks will still be routed through the WISD’s content filters. Parents are responsible for monitoring the student’s use of the device while accessing the Internet at home.

Saving Files

Students may save work online in their Google Drive with their Google account. There is NOT storage space on all school-issued devices. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure work is not lost due to failure or accidental deletion. A technological malfunction is not an acceptable excuse for late or un-submitted work. WCJC uses Blackboard for online classes. Some college classes have online components even if the course is taught fact-to-face.

Software

The software or applications installed by the District must remain on the device in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times. Occasionally the school may add software or applications for use in the classroom.

Additional Software

Students are not allowed to load extra software or applications on their devices without permission. If technical difficulties occur or illegal software is loaded, the device will be restored to original settings.

All ROAR students will be assigned their own personal computers. Internet access is available through their student accounts once logged in to the WISD filtered wireless system. Students MUST use the WISD internet access. Your student is solely responsible for any equipment that he/she brings to school. In addition, Early College High School is not liable for damaged, lost, or stolen equipment and unfortunately, our staff is unable to provide technical support for personal devices brought to school. If a student uses technology inappropriately, the board approved Student Code of Conduct consequences still apply, regardless of who owns the device.

Students may not use devices (including cameras) to record, transmit or post images or video of a person, or persons on campus or during school related activities for non-instructional purposes.

Students and their parents should be aware that electronic communications—email—using District computers are not private and may be monitored by District staff.

Identification Cards

ID cards will be provided to all students at Early College High School. ALL STUDENTS ARE TO WEAR THESE CARDS AT ALL TIMES WHEN THEY ARE ON THE WHS CAMPUS, WHILE RIDING ON DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION, AND IN ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL FUNCTIONS. *They will be required to be worn at all times, visible from the front mid-chest or higher and not on a student’s sleeves or book bag.*

A student ID card must be surrendered when requested by any staff member. ID’s are property of the school.

The first ID is provided at no charge to the student. If the ID card has been mutilated or altered in any way, it is no longer valid and must be replaced. This could include partial IDs, broken IDs, or an ID with missing parts such as name, picture, or bar code.

Students may receive two temporary IDs each six weeks before a violation is recorded. An ID received after 1st period will result in a Type II violation put in TxEIS. The student ID card will be turned in when a student transfers or withdraws from school. The cost for replacement of the ID and lanyard is \$5.00. A lanyard only is \$1.00.

Wharton Early College High School (ROAR)

Student/Parent Contract

Student Name: _____ Cohort Year: _____

(Circle One)

WHARTON EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL Will:

- Provide access to rigorous curriculum.
- Provide academic support for high school and college courses.
- Provide excellent faculty, who are well-versed in research-based instructional strategies.
- Provide access to tools and resources for success as a college student.
- Provide open and useful communication to all stakeholders.

The WHARTON EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL Staff Will:

- Engage students in meaningful, objective-based learning experiences.
- Engage in professional learning opportunities on an ongoing basis.
- Be accessible to students outside the traditional school day.
- Exhibit collegiality in the daily operations of the school

Families Involved In WHARTON EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL Will:

- Provide support to the students and staff.
- Actively participate in the activities planned for ROAR students and their families.
- Monitor student progress and encourage academic studying outside of school.
- Be available to teachers and staff for communication, meetings, and conferences.

Students Involved In WHARTON EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL Will:

- Take 100% responsibility for their learning outcomes and academic success.
- Devote a minimum of 2 hours to homework and studying each evening.
- Attend summer classes and program activities as necessary.
- Utilize all opportunities for academic support provided by WISD and WCJC.
- Be responsible for maintaining textbooks in the condition that they are received.

- Monitor academic progress in high school and college courses.
- Represent the program by exemplifying all expectations outlined by WISD.
- Communicate positively with all stakeholders - parents, teachers, WCJC staff, administration, and peers.
- Support peers in the program by providing encouragement, leadership, and friendship.

By signing this commitment contract, you are stating that you have been informed of all the ROAR policies and procedures and are choosing to opt-in to the ROAR Academy and the program standards. You also agree to follow all rules and policies outlined in the Wharton ISD Student Code of Conduct and all Wharton County Junior College's rules and policies that apply to Early College High School students.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date
