



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Early College High School (ECHS) is a high school that blends high school and college level coursework to provide traditionally underserved students the opportunity to earn an associate degree or up to 60 hours of tuition-free college credit by the time of high school graduation. The Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) was among the first Texas school districts to establish an ECHS in 2006 and has grown to 25 ECHSs (Table 1). In 2022-23, ECHS campuses were supported by \$13,252,568 in Dallas ISD general operating funds. This was an increase of 2.7 percent compared to 2021-22 (\$12,904,762).

Table 1: 2022-23 Dallas ISD Early College High Schools

Early College High Schools	Dallas College Campus
Traditional Early College High Schools (ECHS)	
Garza ECHS	Mountain View Campus
Gilliam ECHS	Cedar Valley Campus
Lassiter ECHS	El Centro Campus
North Lake ECHS	North Lake Campus
Samuell ECHS	Eastfield Campus
Skyline CA	Cedar Valley Campus
Spruce ECHS	Eastfield Campus
Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH)	
Adams P-TECH	Eastfield Campus
Adamson P-TECH	El Centro Campus
Carter P-TECH	Cedar Valley Campus
Conrad H-TECH	Richland Campus
Hillcrest E-TECH	Richland Campus
Jefferson P-TECH	Brookhaven Campus
Kimball E-TECH	Mountain View Campus
Lincoln B-TECH	El Centro Campus
Madison P-TECH	El Centro Campus
Molina B-TECH	Mountain View Campus
North Dallas P-TECH	Brookhaven Campus
Pinkston H-TECH	El Centro Campus
Roosevelt H-TECH	El Centro Campus
Seagoville P-TECH	Eastfield Campus
South Oak Cliff P-TECH	Mountain View Campus
Sunset P-TECH	Mountain View Campus
White B-TECH	Brookhaven Campus
Wilmer-Hutchins E-TECH	North Lake Campus

Source: ECHS program documents and ECHS website accessed 06/02/23.

Note: B-TECH, E-TECH and H-TECH are P-TECH schools focusing on business, electronic technology and engineering, and health-sciences, respectively.

The 25 ECHSs include seven traditional ECHSs and 18 Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH). The ECHS program at the Dallas ISD is coordinated by the Early College Programs division within the Postsecondary Partnerships and Programs department.

The ECHS Department aimed to reach five primary goals for 2022-23:

1. Sixty percent of P-TECH/ECHS graduates will earn passing scores for Texas State Initiative (TSI) subtests (reading and math) or qualify for dual credit waivers/exemptions. (Goal met; see page 36 in the full report for more detail)
2. Sixty-one percent of P-TECH/ECHS graduates will earn an associate degree or 60 college credit hours. (Goal met; see page 47 in the full report for more detail)
3. Eighty-five percent of eligible students will earn a passing grade for Accelerated Geometry or Physics. (Goal met; see page 13 in the full report for more detail)
4. Ninety percent of the P-TECH/ECHS graduates will earn a CCMR point. (Goal met; see page 12 in the full report for more details)
5. Ninety percent of P-TECH/ECHS schools will have a TEA designation. (Goal met; see page eight in the full report for more detail)

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

EQ1: How was the ECHS program implemented in 2022-23?

Enrollment Characteristics of 2022 Summer Programs

- The **Summer Bridge program** is a one-week long program for incoming grade nine students to prepare them for higher education and to meet *TSIA* requirements. The program is not mandatory.
- Overall, 1,721 incoming ECHS students attended at least one day of the Summer Bridge Program between June 6 and June 10, 2022 (70% of all incoming grade nine ECHS students).
- **Summer Hub program** provided additional support to grade nine to 12 students who took dual credit courses at Dallas College during the Summer I (June 6 – July 8, 2022) and Summer II (July 11 – August 11, 2022) semesters. Program staff noted that this extra support was crucial in helping students complete their college courses.
- During the Summer I semester, 1,536 students enrolled in 2,118 courses. Of these, 1,324 students (86%) passed 1,746 courses (82%).
- During the Summer II semester, 598 students enrolled in 747 courses. Of these, 455 students (76%) passed 529 courses (71%).

- **Acceleration in Physics and Geometry Program** was held June 6 to June 27, 2022, and enabled ECHS students to complete two semesters of Physics or Geometry.
- Program staff reported that 827 of the 866 students (95%) who enrolled completed the program (Geometry, $n=536$; Physics, $n=291$). Of the students who completed the program 99.8 percent passed Geometry and 100 percent passed Physics.

Demographic and Enrollment Characteristics of Students

Demographic Characteristics

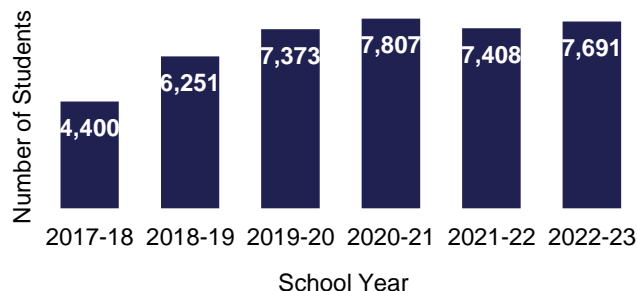
During the 2022-23 school year, a total of 7,691 students were enrolled in an ECHS.

- The ethnic composition of ECHS students was similar to Dallas ISD high school students.
- Compared to Dallas ISD high school students, ECHS students had a higher percentage of female students (50% vs 57%) There were fewer special education students at ECHSs (3%) than the district (10%).
- A lower percentage of ECHS students were at risk than all district students (62% vs 67%) and fewer received special education services (3% vs 10%).
- Demographic characteristics of traditional ECHS students were comparable to P-TECH students except in five aspects:
 - First, a higher percentage of Hispanic students enrolled in traditional ECHSs than P-TECHs (83% vs 76%).
 - Second, a higher percentage of African American students enrolled in P-TECHs than traditional ECHSs (20% vs 15%).
 - Third, a slightly higher percentage of White students enrolled in P-TECHs than traditional ECHSs (2% vs 1%).
 - Third, a higher percentage of traditional ECHS students were TAG eligible (34% vs 24%).
 - Fourth, a smaller percentage of traditional ECHS students were at-risk of dropping out of school (54% vs 64%).

Enrollment Characteristics

With the opening of additional ECHSs and higher enrollment numbers at existing schools, enrollment numbers have grown significantly over the past five years from 4,400 in 2017-18 to 7,691 students in 2022-23 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: 2016-17 to 2021-22 Student Enrollment in Early College High School Programs



Source: End-of-year demographic files dated 06/05/17 (2016-17), 06/04/18 (2017-18), 05/28/19 (2018-19), 05/29/20 (2019-20), 06/07/21 (2020-21), 06/06/22 (2021-22), 05/12/23 (2022-23), and ECHS identification file 10/12/23 (2022-23).

Note: Methodology for identifying ECHS students changed with the 2021-22 school year. Therefore, enrollment changes between years should be viewed with caution.

Thirty-two percent of students ($n=2,446$) were enrolled in grade nine, 27 percent in grade 10 ($n=2,099$), 22 percent in grade 11 ($n=1,683$), and 19 percent in grade 12 ($n=1,463$).

Attendance Rates

- The average attendance rate for district ECHS students was seven percentage points higher than non-ECHS students (94.5% versus 87.3%).
- Students enrolled in traditional ECHSs had an average attendance rate of 95.2 percent, while students at P-TECHs had an average attendance rate of 94.2 percent.

Student Retention Rates

Overall, retention rates were higher for ECHS students than comprehensive high school students enrolled in campuses offering the ECHS program.

- The two-year retention rate difference nine percentage points (85% versus 76%).
- The three-year retention rate difference was eight percentage points (67% versus 59%).
- The four-year retention rate difference was three percentage points (53% versus 50%).
- Traditional ECHS students had a higher retention rate than P-TECH students for all cohorts. The retention rate difference for the 2021-22 cohort was five percentage points, for the 2020-21 cohort 12 percentage points, and for the 2019-20 cohort 24 percentage points.

Graduation Rates

- The average four-year graduation rate for the 2019-20 ECHS cohort similar to that of Dallas ISD comprehensive high school (53% each).
- The graduation rate of traditional ECHS students was 23 percentage points higher than that of P-TECH students (70% versus 47%).
- Overall, the graduation rate for continuously enrolled students differed by seven percentage points between ECHS students (100%) and comprehensive high school students (93%).

EQ2: What were stakeholders' perceptions of the ECHS?

ECHS Program

- Fifty-eight percent of ECHS seniors responded to the ECHS Senior Exit Survey.
- Overall, 93 percent of seniors indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the educational opportunities the Dallas ISD provided.
- Seniors indicated that their high schools prepared them well (i.e. good or excellent) across all life skill areas from critical thinking, communications, and teamwork to conflict resolution. However, seniors also indicated they wished for more job-related skill training.

P-TECH Internship Opportunities

- Twenty-six percent of P-TECH internship participants and 63 percent of employers provided feedback.
- Overall, all P-TECH interns indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Internship program and 94 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were well prepared for the internship.
- All employers noted that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the Dallas ISD internship program and would participate in the internship program again. Employers also agreed or strongly agreed that the P-TECH interns met their expectations (100%).

EQ3: How did ECHS students perform in 2022-23?

Post-Secondary Readiness Assessments

STAAR EOC

Overall, 5,954 out of the 7,691 ECHS high school students took one or more STAAR EOC exams in 2022-23 (77%).

- Most ECHS students met the Approaches+ benchmark for U.S. History (97%), followed by Biology (95%) and English II (87%).
- Similarly, the greatest number of students met the Meets+ benchmark in U.S. History (71%), followed by English II (69%) and Biology (65%).
- A higher percentage of traditional ECHS students met Approaches+ and Meets+ benchmarks across all subjects than P-TECH students.

SAT

Overall, 3,146 ECHS students enrolled in grade 11 (2020-21 cohort) and grade 12 (2019-20 cohort).

- Forty-five percent of grade 11 and 12 ECHS students met the TSI SAT benchmark on ERW (480).
- Seventeen percent met the TSI SAT benchmark on mathematics (530).
- Traditional ECHS students met TSI SAT benchmarks at a higher rate than P-TECH students (difference of 20

percentage points for mathematics to 25 percentage points for ERW).

- In comparison, 16 percent of non-ECHS students enrolled in comprehensive high schools offering ECHS program met the TSI benchmark for ERW, and five percent met the TSI benchmark for mathematics.

ACT

In 2022-23, Dallas ISD did not offer school day ACT testing which directly impacted the percentage of students who took the ACT, and the overall number of students who met TSI ACT benchmarks. Overall, of 1,463 ECHS students enrolled in grade 12 (2019-20 cohort), one percent met the TSI ACT benchmark on Mathematics and English.

TSIA

Meeting TSIA benchmarks, or qualifying for an exemption, indicates that students are ready for college-level course work in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics.

- Of the 1,460 ECHS 2022-23 graduates, 79 percent met TSIA benchmarks or qualified for an exemption for ELAR, and 81 percent met TSIA benchmarks for mathematics
- Overall, ECHS graduates outperformed comprehensive high school graduates enrolled in campuses offering the ECHS program by 57 (ELAR) to 67 (mathematics) percentage points.

Dual Credit

- Of the 7,691 ECHS students enrolled in 2022-23, 90 percent took dual credit courses through Dallas College.
- A total of 6,564 ECHS students (94.5%) passed one or more courses for a total of 27,150 courses passed (89.8%).
- P-TECH students accounted for the majority of ECHS dual credit students (71%) and dual credit hours earned (66%).
- ECHS students who passed one or more dual credit courses completed on average 13.0 dual credit hours across all grade levels in 2022-23.
- Traditional ECHS students on average completed slightly more dual credit hours per person (14.5 hours) than P-TECH students (12.1 hours).
- Overall, 4,863 out of 7,691 ECHS students (63%) earned the expected number of dual credit hours¹.

Credentials

- Overall, 289 grade 12 ECHS students completed 449 **educational certificates** while enrolled at Dallas College.
- Students completed between one and four certificates with an average of 1.6 certificates per student.

¹ Although, meeting targeted dual credit hours for each grade level was not an ECHS goal for 2022-23, the percentage of students who met 2019-20

goals were tracked to provide comprehensive achievement data to program staff.

- P-TECH students accounted for 90 percent of ECHS students who completed a certificate and 89 percent of the 449 completed certificates.
- In addition, 749 ECHS students earned a total of 1,008 **industry-based certifications** in 2022-23, including 804 certifications listed in the A-F accountability system.
- Overall, 94 percent of students who earned industry-based certifications in 2022-23 were P-TECH students.

Associate Degrees/60 College Credit Hours

Of the 1,460 ECHS students who graduated in 2022-23, 951 students (65%) earned an associate degree or 60 dual credit hours

- Of the ECHS students who met the goal, 94 percent ($n=897$) earned an associate degree while six percent ($n=54$) earned 60 or more dual credit hours.
- Sixty-one percent ($n=580$) of students who met the goal were P-Tech students, while 39 percent ($n=371$) were traditional ECHS students.

College Enrollment

- According to the 2022-23 NSC data file, 60 percent of 2021-22 ECHS graduates and 44 percent of non-ECHS graduates enrolled in college within one year of graduation.
- More ECHS students (49%) enrolled in a four-year university than non-ECHS students (25%). Similarly, a significantly lower percentage of ECHS students (11%) enrolled in a two-year college or trade school than non-ECHS students (18%).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the key findings, the following recommendations are offered for stakeholders.

Continue to work with the IT Department on accurately tracking ECHS participation. Although steps were taken to more accurately track specialized student groups in PowerSchool, review of program provided enrollment data indicated that traditional ECHS and P-TECH students are not accurately identified in PowerSchool, thus impacting the evaluation. ECHS program staff should continue to work with campus data controllers to accurately track program participation via PowerSchool to increase the accuracy of future data analyses.

Continue to support ECHS campuses in monitoring dual-credit course completions. Overall, 63 percent of ECHS students met the targeted cumulative number of dual credit hours by the end of each grade level. While this is the second year of continued increase in the percentage of students meeting their targeted dual credit hours ECHS department staff and P-TECH/ECHS Program Specialist (ESSER funded) should continue to help campuses identify students early who may not meet the targeted dual credit hours by the end of the school year and provide necessary support.

Continue to promote ECHS students' completion of educational certificates or industry-based certifications. Completion of educational certificates ($n=449$) and industry-based certifications ($n=1,008$) increased for a second year. However, the number of students earning certificates are still below prior heights. Given that industry-based certifications can provide students with an advantage in finding employment, ECHS staff should, in cooperation with the Career and Technical Education Department, monitor student participation.

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