



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY,  
NY 12234

To: Higher Education Committee  
From: Valerie Grey  
Subject: Smart Scholars Early College High School Program  
Date: May 31, 2011  
Authorizations:

### **SUMMARY**

#### **Issue for Discussion**

How are the Smart Scholars Early College High Schools (SS ECHS) ensuring the quality of instruction and quality of work in college level courses provided to ECHS students?

#### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

Review of Policy  
For Information

#### **Proposed Handling**

A presentation to the Higher Education Committee at the June 2011 meeting by SS ECHS partnerships from Yonkers Public Schools and Westchester Community College and the Early College Initiative (ECI) at CUNY will provide a brief overview of the SS ECHS program and the strategies the partnerships are using to ensure students' college readiness and the quality of college level instruction. Andrea Mulkey from SUNY/EdWorks who serves as intermediary for the Smart Scholars program will also be participating. Additional presentations from ECHS programs using different models are planned for later this year.

#### **Background Information**

The national **Early College High School Initiative** (ECHSI) was launched by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and additional funders in 2002. Their goal was to develop a new model of schooling that blends high school and college in a coherent educational program. This new type of school offers students traditionally

underrepresented in postsecondary education the opportunity to earn one to two years of college credit at no cost while they are still in high school. By changing the structure of the high school years and compressing the number of years to a college degree, early college high schools have proven to be strong models for improving high school graduation rates and better preparing students for entry into high-skill careers.

New York has been part of the early college high school movement since its inception. In 2002, Middle College High School at LaGuardia Community College (founded in 1974 as an innovative small public secondary school on the campus of LaGuardia Community College) became the first school in the nation to redesign its curriculum to be an early college high school with funding from ECHSI. During the same timeframe, Bard College, in partnership with the New York City Department of Education, opened Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) in Manhattan. This school offers high achieving students the opportunity to earn a high school Regents diploma and a tuition-free Bard College associate's degree in four years. (A second campus, BHSEC Queens opened in 2008.)

Since 2002, 15 schools in New York State have been redesigned or created as part of the ECHSI. All but two of these schools (Buffalo Middle College High School and Gateway to College at Monroe Community College in Rochester) are located in New York City and partnered with CUNY's Early College Initiative (ECI).

Today, the national ECHSI includes 230 schools in 24 states, serving over 50,000 students. Seventy percent (70 percent) of these students are students of color, and 59 percent are eligible for the free and reduced price lunch program (FRPL). In 2009, 3,000 ECHSI students graduated from the 64 early college schools open for four or more years. These graduates earned an average of 20 or more transferable college credits. Thirty-nine percent (39 percent) earned at least one year of college credit, and 25 percent earned two full years of college credit or an Associate's degree.<sup>1</sup> Within the ECHSI, the ECI at CUNY also has impressive results. Over 90 percent of ECI students are students of color, and 64 percent participate in FRPL. Among the six schools in the ECI that had graduating classes in 2009, 45 percent of the graduates entered CUNY colleges with an average of 11 college credits.

In 2007, the Board of Regents proposed the **Smart Scholars Early College High School Program** to help close the student achievement gap. The University of the State of New York initiated the first cohort of 11 SS ECHS school-college partnerships in December 2009 with a \$6 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In April 2011, the State provided a matching \$6 million to fund a second cohort that includes 12 new SS ECHS partnerships as well as four (4) partnerships from the first cohort that will expand their services. The new schools or ECHS programs will open in September 2011, bringing the total number of ECHSs participating in the Smart Scholars program to 23. Key components of this program include:

- Targeting high school students from groups traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education

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<sup>1</sup> *Early College High School: A Portrait in Numbers*, Jobs for the Future (JFF), 2010

- Providing students with intense academic and social supports to attain college readiness and complete college level work
- Providing students with the opportunity to earn 20 to 60 transferable college credits (including dual credits) along with their high school diplomas, at no cost to students
- Collaboration of the school and college partners to ensure effective support of both students and high school and college faculty, articulation between the high school and college courses, and the rigor of both the high school and college courses

The Smart Scholars Early College High School Program is modeled after the national ECHSI; however, most of the Cohort 1 programs are schools within schools instead of schools located on a college campus or stand alone schools, and most have vetted teachers serving as instructors for at least some of the college courses. The presentation provided at the June 2011 meeting will address how the SS ECHS partners are ensuring quality college level instruction for their students. It is the combination of the collaborative activities that take place between the school and college partners, and the support the partnerships receive from the intermediary, SUNY/EdWorks, that are the essential factors that contribute to the program's success in meeting this objective.

The attached report and scheduled presentation summarize key features of the SS ECHSs and outline strategies being used to promote college readiness and ensure quality college level instruction.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents continue to support the Smart Scholars Early College High School Program's efforts to provide ECHS students - students traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education - access to rigorous college level instruction by supporting initiatives that fund such instruction and the associated support structures provided to ECHS students and vetted high school teachers. The Regents recent endorsement of a bill to give ECHSs access to TAP funding is an example of such support.

Attachment

## **Information in Support of Recommendation**

### **Smart Scholars Early College High School Program: Strategies for Preparing Students Traditionally Underrepresented in Postsecondary Education for and Providing Them with Rigorous College Courses**

Through the Smart Scholars Early College High School (SS ECHS) Program, institutions of higher education (IHEs) partner with public school districts or public charter schools to form early college high schools that help students who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education not only to become college-ready but also to accelerate their completion of college by earning a significant number of transferable college credits, a minimum of 20 but up to 60 credits. The curriculum includes “dual credit” courses that earn college credit as well as meet high school graduation requirements. The result is increased high school graduation and college completion rates, reduced college tuition costs for families, and reduced time to complete a college degree. This report highlights the key strategies used by the SS ECHS to not only prepare students for college level work but also provide college level instruction.

#### **An Overview of the Smart Scholars Early College High Schools (SS ECHSs)**

The first cohort of 11 SS ECHSs includes 6 projects that are schools within schools, 1 school-within-a-school that will convert the ECHS model to the entire high school over a four-year period, 1 start-up standalone school, and 3 pre-existing standalone schools that were started by other intermediary organizations, but are using Smart Scholars funding for program expansion. Four of the lead agencies are IHEs; the remaining lead agencies are school districts. Ten SUNY institutions, one CUNY institution and five independent colleges or universities serve as lead agencies or partner institutions for the schools. The Cohort 1 schools will serve approximately 2,600 students during the three implementation years of the grant period. During the 2010-2011 school year, 84 percent of the students were students of color and at least 68 percent participated in the free and reduced price lunch program. Table 1 provides a list of the Cohort 1 schools and their partners.

The second cohort of SS ECHSs will open in September 2011 and serve approximately 3,000 students during the three implementation years of the grant period. They include 12 new ECHS programs and 4 from the original cohort that are receiving new funding to expand their programs. Cohort 2 adds four SUNY, one CUNY and four independent IHEs to the network of SS ECHS partners. In addition, one of the new schools is also a member of the Early College Initiative (ECI) at CUNY. ECI is a network of early college schools that first opened in 2002. Table 2 provides a list of the Cohort 2 schools and their partners. Since the Cohort 2 schools have not yet started to operate, this report will focus on the features of Cohort 1.

**Table 1: Smart Scholars Early College High School Partnerships – Cohort 1**

<b>Regents Higher Education Region</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>School Design</b>	<b>Projected # students served during grant period</b>
Capital	<b>City School District of Albany</b>	Hudson Valley Community College, University at Albany, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	A school-within-a-school at Albany High School	275
Capital	<b>Schenectady County Community College</b>	Schenectady City School District	A school-within-a-school at Schenectady High School	300
Central	<b>Syracuse City School District</b>	Onondaga Community College, SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry at Syracuse	A school-within-a-school at the Institute of Technology at Syracuse Central High School	300
Finger Lakes	<b>Rochester City School District</b> (Rochester Early College International High School)	Monroe Community College, St. John Fisher College, 4 CBOs	Only standalone start up school in Cohort 1	300
Hudson Valley	<b>Yonkers City School District</b> (Roosevelt HS "Collegiate Academy")	Westchester Community College	Started as a school-within-a-school. The district will convert the entire high school into an ECHS over a 4 year period, using SIG funding	220
Long Island	<b>Freeport Central School District</b>	Long Island University, CW Post Campus	A school-within-a-school at Freeport High School	80
Long Island	<b>SUNY College at Old Westbury</b>	Roosevelt Union Free School District	A school-within-a-school at Roosevelt High School	180
Mohawk Valley	<b>Greater Amsterdam Central School District</b>	Fulton Montgomery Community College, Centro Civico (CBO)	A school within-a-school at Amsterdam High School	90
New York City	<b>Bard College</b>	Bard High School Early College – Manhattan and Queens (NYC DOE)	A pre-existing school, opened in 2001 by Bard College. Their Smart Scholars project funds the recruitment and academic support of students from targeted underserved middle schools, who will make up approximately 25 percent of each entering class	300
New York City	<b>New York City College of Technology</b>	City Polytechnic High School of Engineering	A pre-existing ECHS, opened in 2009 by the ECI at CUNY	300
Western	<b>Buffalo City School District</b>	Erie Community College D'Youville College	2003 by the Middle College National Consortium	255
Total # students served during the three implementation years of the grant				2,600

**Table 2: Smart Scholars Early College High Schools – Cohort 2**

<b>Regents Higher Education Region</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>School design</b>	<b>Projected # of students served during grant period</b>
Capital	<b>Schenectady County Community College</b>	Schenectady City School District	A school-within-a-school at Schenectady High School	<i>In addition to 300 students from Cohort 1, this school will serve 150 more students with its expansion grant</i>
Capital	<b>Ballston Spa School District</b>	HVCC and several CBOs	Standalone school at HVCC’s “Tec-Smart” campus in Malta, NY	275
Central	<b>Syracuse City School District</b>	Onondaga CC, SUNY ESF, SUPA, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection	A school-within-a-school at William H. Nottingham High School	75
Finger Lakes	<b>Rochester City School District</b>	St. John Fisher College, Monroe CC, Asia Society, Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection, LeadAmerica, Xerox Corp.	A standalone school (Plans are for the ECHS to be moved to the MCC campus in the future)	<i>This Cohort 1 school will continue to serve 300 students with expanded services</i>
Hudson Valley	<b>Yonkers City School District</b>	Academy of Medical Professions, Westchester CC, College of Westchester	A school-within-a-school at Charles E. Gorton High School	300
Long Island	<b>RFSUNY at Farmingdale State College</b>	Amityville Memorial H.S., Brentwood H.S., Hempstead H.S. NYC Dept. of ED STH, Wyandanch Memorial H.S.	On College campus at Farmingdale State College	300
Long Island	<b>SUNY College at Old Westbury</b>	Roosevelt Union Free School District	A school-within-a-school at Roosevelt HS, Long Island	<i>This Cohort 1 school will continue to serve 180 students with expanded services</i>
Mohawk Valley	<b>Schoharie Central School District</b>	Cobleskill - Richmondville CSD, Middleburgh CSD, SUNY Cobleskill, Capital Region BOCES	On College campus at SUNY Cobleskill	300

**Table 2: Smart Scholars Early College High Schools – Cohort 2**

<b>Regents Higher Education Region</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>School design</b>	<b>Projected # of students served during grant period</b>
New York City	<b>Pathways College Prep School (NYC/DOE)</b>	St. Johns University, Adelphi University	A school-within-a-school	290
New York City	<b>RFCUNY NYC College of Technology (Pathways in Technology ECHS)</b>	NYC DOE, IBM,	A standalone school. Also part of the Early College Initiative at CUNY	300
New York City	<b>Long Island University</b>	NYC DOE/ Boys and Girls High School	A school-within-a-school at Boys and Girls High School	100
New York City	<b>RFCUNY NYC College of Technology (City Polytechnic H.S. of Engineering)</b>	NYC DOE/City Polytechnic H.S. of Engineering	A pre-existing ECHS, opened in 2009 by the Early College Initiative at CUNY	<i>In addition to 300 students in Cohort 1, this school will serve 100 more students with its expansion grant</i>
New York City	<b>RFCUNY Medgar Evers College</b>	NYC DOE/Medgar Evers College Prep School	A school-within-a-school at Medgar Evers College Prep School located on the Medgar Evers College Campus	325
North Country	<b>North Country Community College</b>	Lake Placid H.S., Saranac Lake H.S., Tupper Lake C.S.D.,	A school-within-a-school at the partner school districts with some classes on the NCCC campus	180
North Country	<b>RFSUNY College of Technology at Canton</b>	Massena Central School District, Ogdensburg City School District, St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES, St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, Akwesasne Casino	A school-within-a-school at the Massena Central and Ogdensburg City School Districts	120
Western	<b>Niagara Falls City School District</b>	Niagara University	A school-within-a-school at Niagara Falls High School	250
<b>Total # students served during the three implementation years of the grant</b>				<b>3,065</b>

## Preparing ECHS Students for College Level Instruction

As the target population for early college high schools is students who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, a significant focus of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade levels at these schools is providing students with instruction as well as academic and social support structures that will address their deficiencies and get them college-ready. ECHS students typically spend their first two years of study taking mostly high school level courses that will prepare them for college level work. Another significant component of the ECHS program is the extra-curricular activities that help promote a college-going culture and build a mindset that empowers students to pursue rigorous studies. The SS ECHSs are employing several strategies to achieve these objectives. These strategies continue as the students move into 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade when they take most of their college level courses, including dual credit courses that meet high school graduation requirements. Strategies being employed by the schools include:

- Strong collaboration between the schools and their IHE partners to ensure that curriculum and instruction at the secondary level are aligned to those at the college level, to promote students' smooth progress from secondary to college level work.
- Developing curricula with a strong focus on rigor and relevance, and on building reading, writing and math skills, and integrating these skills into instruction across all subject areas.
- Using assessment and data driven instruction to identify students' academic needs and adapt instruction to promote mastery of essential skills and concepts, and move students to college readiness.
- Providing "Skills for Success" or "College 101" classes.
- Providing an academic support center modeled after college academic support centers and/or access to the academic support center on the college campus.
- Providing advisory groups.
- Providing extended learning time, including tutoring and courses that focus on strengthening language arts and math skills.
- Having college professors teach some of the high school courses, which helps to develop students' expectations and skills for doing college level work.

Another strategy that has been identified by the national ECHSI intermediary, Jobs for the Future (JFF) and that may be adopted by some Smart Scholars ECHSs for use when students are taking college courses is "wrap around courses" or "shadow" courses – seminar courses (companion courses to a college course) that provide supplemental instruction and study strategies.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> JFF, *A Policymaker's Guide to Early College Designs*, 2010, p.28



Some examples of strategies and activities that help promote a college-going culture include having faculty and administrators maintain and communicate to the students high expectations of the students' capabilities of doing college level work; hosting frequent activities on college campuses, and otherwise providing students access to college campuses such as to campus events, the college library and computer center, and the college academic support center; providing students as well as parents with presentations about college admissions and college life; and providing summer programs that focus on college readiness.

### Support from the Statewide Intermediary

The statewide intermediary, SUNY/EdWorks supports the schools in implementing these strategies by providing technical assistance and professional development. The SUNY/EdWorks field manager brings to the SS ECHS project six years of successful experience developing nine early college high schools in Ohio. She holds meetings with SS ECHS administrators, participates in curriculum and other committee meetings, maintains frequent communication by phone and e-mail with the SS ECHS partners, and organizes professional development sessions for the SS ECHS partnerships. Furthermore, EdWorks has developed best practice designs, written guidance and templates for instructional and leadership training, implementing curriculum alignment, college-going culture activities and other components essential to effective early college high schools. These resources are being customized and shared with the SS ECHS partners.

### Determining Students' Readiness for College Level Courses

The rigorous, data-driven instruction and extra supports the SS ECHS students receive for their secondary courses helps ensure they master the skills needed to take college courses. The schools use multiple measures to assess the students' readiness for college-level work. These measures include:

- Attaining the same score on a standardized placement test (e.g., ACCUPLACER, COMPASS, the IHE's own test) as traditional students matriculating into the college. *Eight of the 11 Smart Scholars ECHSs use this criterion. It should be noted, however, that assessments are first used as diagnostic tools to help identify areas in which students need more support to get college-ready.*
- End-of-course high school exams, GPA.
- Teacher or principal recommendation.

For college courses that have prerequisites, SS ECHS students must meet the same requirements that traditional students are expected to meet at the college conferring the credit. The curriculum and support structures the ECHS prepare SS ECHS students to meet these prerequisites.

## College Level Instruction for ECHS Students

A central goal of early college high schools is to provide students college courses for which they can earn transferable credits. All college level courses for SS ECHS students are non-remedial and must meet the standards of the IHE conferring the credit. These courses are rigorous and use the same syllabi and are assessed by the same tools used for traditional students matriculated at the IHE. Similarly, if the courses are being taught by high school teachers, those teachers must be approved by the college department for the course and must meet the same standards as faculty teaching directly in their departments. Just as ECHS administrators and teachers collaborate with their partner IHE to ensure students have the preparation and support to do college level work, *an essential ECHS strategy is the collaboration that takes place among the IHE and ECHS faculty and administrators to ensure that the ECHS students are receiving college level instruction that is on par with that delivered to traditional college students.*

As a cost saving measure, nine of the eleven ECHSs within the network of Cohort 1 SS ECHSs will use vetted high school teachers as instructors for some or all of their college courses. The vetting process for high school teachers includes:

- Review of the credentials of all course instructors using the same hiring standards as those used for traditional college instructors
  - Review transcripts and detailed application
  - The instructor must have a Master's degree or 18+ credits in the specific area to be approved to teach a course
- Provide course-specific professional development and oversight
  - Multi-day summer training for each course facilitated by professors
  - Faculty mentor
  - Vetted teachers visit classes taught by college faculty in same subject
  - College faculty jointly plan and teach some classes
- Ensure consistency in curricular content and assessment
  - Collaboration on course planning, review of syllabus by college faculty
  - Teacher sends student work samples regularly to a college faculty member to compare their quality and academic demands to those in the comparable college courses offered on campus.
- Perform regular evaluation for continuous improvement
  - Site visits
  - Review student work as well as grades

As was noted above, nine of the 11 SS ECHSs in Cohort 1 have vetted high school teachers teaching at least some of their college courses. Of these nine schools, seven have IHE partners that are members of the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment

Partnerships (NACEP). This organization has established nationally recognized standards for teaching high school students college level courses in the high school, including standards for course content, instructors, student enrollment, student assessment, and program evaluation.<sup>3</sup> The two ECHSs using vetted teachers whose partner IHEs are not affiliated with NACEP, are following procedures consistent with the NACEP Standards.

### Examples of College Level Instruction at the Smart Scholars ECHS

Table 3 provides an overview of the college courses that were offered to Smart Scholars ECHS students the first semester of this school year. The SS ECHSs have made a priority in planning their curriculums to offer college courses that meet the general education requirements of the partner IHE(s), which will support the students' progress toward degree attainment as well as facilitate the transferability of the credits they earn to other colleges.

### Example of ECHS-IHE Collaboration: Yonkers CSD and Westchester Community College

The collaboration taking place between Yonkers Public Schools and Westchester Community College as they develop the curriculum for the Roosevelt ECHS provides an example of how school district and IHE partners work together to ensure college readiness and quality college instruction for ECHS students. Staff and faculty from Yonkers Public Schools and WCC will provide a brief presentation at the June 2011 meeting on their collaborative experience developing and implementing a College Prep Skills course for ninth graders.

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<sup>3</sup> NACEP *Program Standards and Required Evidence for Accreditation* <http://nacep.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/NACEP-Standards-2011-and-Required-Evidence.pdf>

**Table 3: Overview of College Courses Offered to Smart Scholars ECHS Students during the Fall of the 2010-11 School Year**

ECHS	IHE Granting the Credit	Course	# Credits	Grade of Students
Freeport ECHS	Long Island University – CW Post	Foundations of Western Civilization - Global History 9	3	9
		Western Civilization II - Global History 10	3	10
		Survey Literature	3	12
Roosevelt ECHS – Yonkers	Westchester CC	College Prep Skills	1	9
	Mercy College	Math 113: Geometry	3	10, 11
		Mat 116: College Algebra	3	10, 11
		Hist 101: European History	3	10
		Hist 105: American History	3	11
Albany ECHS	Rochester Institute of Technology	Design and Drawing for Production	4	9
Rochester ECIHS	Monroe CC	CIS 121 Microsoft Office Technology	4	9
Roosevelt ECHS – Roosevelt Union Free School District	SUNY/ College at Old Westbury	EL1000.HSR CRN 46491 English Composition 1	4	12
		EL1000.HSR CRN 46482 English Composition 1	4	11
		AS1152.HSR CRN 46481 Themes in US History	4	11
*Buffalo MECHS	D'Youville College	FA 205: Drawing	3	10
City Polytechnic High School of Engineering, Architecture and Technology	CUNY- New York City College of Technology	MAT 1175: Fundamentals of Mathematics	4	10
		MAT 1275: College Algebra and Trigonometry	4	10
Syracuse ECHS at ITC	SUNY – College of Environmental Science and Forestry	LSA 296: Urban Geography	2	12
Schenectady ECHS	Schenectady CCC	FSS 120: Freshman Success Seminar	1	9
Greater Amsterdam ECHS	Will begin offering college level courses when students reach 10 <sup>th</sup> grade.			
Bard HSEC	Students take all college courses in their third and fourth years at the school.			

\* Has been in operation since 2003. Upperclassmen took 27 courses at ECCC during the 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

## **Evidence of Success from the ECI at CUNY**

While it is too early to provide outcome data from the SS ECHS Program, the Early College Initiative at CUNY has been collecting data on its schools for the past eight years. Among the six schools in the ECI that had graduating classes that year, 45 percent of the graduates entered CUNY colleges with an average of 11 college credits. Graduates of one school brought an average of over 15 college credits with them to CUNY colleges. Cass Conrad, the executive director of School Support and Development at CUNY will provide a brief summary of the ECI program and its successes at the June 2011 meeting.

## **Opportunities and Next Steps**

The SS ECHS partners and staff are very excited about the progress made thus far, and look forward to continuing to develop and enhance the program. Increasing SS ECHS students' access to courses taught on IHE campuses, launching the second cohort of SS ECHSs, strengthening the statewide network of ECHSs, expanding the transferability of SS ECHS students' college credits, providing components of ECHS as best practices for high needs schools to model, and developing the financial support to sustain ECHSs are all objectives being pursued during the grant period.

### Increasing College Courses Offered on IHE Campuses

A major objective the SS ECHS partners are focusing on, with support from the SUNY/EdWorks intermediary, is increasing the number of courses students take on the partner IHE campus(es). It costs more to provide instruction by college faculty than by vetted high school teachers and to offer the courses on the college campus than at a high school. However, the experience and research of the Early College High School Initiative (ECHSI) indicates that ECHS students develop stronger identities as college goers and are more successful when the ECHS is located on a college campus or students take most of their college courses on the college campus. The ECHSI refers to this phenomenon as "the power of place".<sup>4</sup>

### Launching the Second SS ECHS Cohort

The second cohort of SS ECHS partnerships is preparing to open their ECHS programs in September 2011. The Requests for Proposal (RFP) for Cohort 2 gave priority to programs that included a significant number of classes and activities on the partner IHE campuses. The result of this strategy is that 11 of the 12 new SS ECHSs in Cohort 2 will either have their schools located on the partner IHE campus or have students taking most or all of their college courses on the partner IHE campus by the students' junior year.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.earlycolleges.org/overview.html>

## Strengthening the Statewide Network of ECHSs

The SS ECHSs are gradually connecting with the other ECHSs in New York. There is already some overlap with ECHSs sponsored by the Middle Colleges National Consortium and the ECI at CUNY because a few of the ECHSs that were initiated by these intermediaries receive additional funding from the Smart Scholars initiative. The SUNY/EdWorks intermediary has initiated efforts to reach out to administrators of these intermediaries to promote collaboration in sharing best practices as well as advocating for state policies and funding to grow and sustain ECHSs in New York.

## Expanding Transferability of Credit

As noted earlier, a central goal of the SS ECHS Program is to provide underrepresented students the opportunity to earn at least 20, but up to 60 transferable college credits at no cost while in high school. A subcommittee of the SS ECHS Advisory Council has been tasked with developing articulation agreements among all the SS ECHS IHE partners to ensure that SS ECHS graduates will be able to transfer the college credits they earn to any of the IHEs in the statewide SS ECHS network. A long-range goal will be to extend these articulation agreements to all IHE partners of all ECHSs in New York. As SUNY and CUNY develop their own articulation agreements across their respective campuses, it is foreseen that, in the not too distant future, SS ECHS graduates will be able to enter any state IHE to which they are accepted with significant advanced standing.

## Expanding Best Practices to High Need Schools

As the SS ECHSs progress, they will perfect several strategies for preparing disadvantaged students for college. These strategies can be transferred in part or in whole to other high schools where students are underperforming or have significant populations of students who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education. Several of the SS ECHSs have already committed to serving as model schools for other schools. An exciting early outcome of the SS ECHS initiative is that one of the partners in the first cohort, Yonkers Public Schools, has adopted ECHS as a transformation strategy for Roosevelt High School. Over a four-year period, with the support of a School Improvement Grant (SIG), the entire high school will be transformed into an ECHS.

## Sustaining ECHSs

During the summer of 2010, a subcommittee of the SS ECHS Advisory Council initiated a proposal for early college high schools to have access to State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) funding. The Regents endorsed this proposal at their November 2010 meeting, and NYSED's Office of Counsel has drafted a bill for consideration. The SS ECHS partners and Advisory Council members will advocate for the bill's passage. Having access to TAP funds will provide all ECHSs in New York a stable funding source for the "excess costs" of operating an ECHS, i.e., those costs that exceed the costs of operating a traditional high school, such as the cost for offering college courses, transportation to the partner college campus and additional academic support structures. To date, these costs have been supported by temporary grant programs.

The SS ECHS Program staff and partners look to the Regents for continued support in promoting policies and funding to sustain early college high schools in New York. As demonstrated with this report and the presentation planned for the June 2011 meeting, ECHS holds strong promise for bringing about increased high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment rates for our state's youth, particularly those traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education.