

Start college early, finish college strong

Establish state support
for early college high schools

Early college high schools are programs established
within existing high schools that enable students to
accrue college credit while they are still in high school



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The New York state legislature is considering a bill to allocate state funds to early college high schools, which are currently funded by a private grant. The proposed bill would allow early college high schools to apply directly to the state's Higher Education Services Corporation for tuition assistance via the Tuition Assistance Program¹ for funding to support early college programs with a high volume of low-income students. In turn, students participating in the program could earn up to two years of college credit before even graduating from high school, putting them well ahead of the curve and significantly increasing their chances of graduating with a college degree.²

State lawmakers should support the proposal, which would continue resources to make sure that low-income New York students continue to have access to this important path to college.

Early college high schools help more kids graduate from college

There are 23 early college high schools serving hundreds of New York students across the state, mostly from low-income and disadvantaged backgrounds.³

Nationally, early college high schools have provided an all-important mechanism to help kids afford college and prepare for the rigors of higher education. By offering additional supports in high school and exposing students to college-level coursework, these programs offer students and their families ongoing assurance that they will be truly prepared for college. According to the Early College High School Initiative,⁴ more than 85 percent of students nationwide who graduated from early college programs in 2007 did so with a significant amount of college credit and 65 percent were accepted into four-year baccalaureate programs.⁵ Studies show that providing financial support to early college students from low-income communities boosts college matriculation rates,⁶ helping to close the achievement gap.

Support for early college high schools is sound economic policy

By 2018, experts predict that 73 percent of all New York jobs will be middle- or high-skill jobs, meaning that qualified candidates will need training beyond high school, either in a technical setting or through two or four-year college degrees. The return on investment is significant not just for the kids participating in the programs, but also for the state. Estimates show that by financing early college high school programs, New York could see a return of investment of 254 percent in just 15 years and 648 percent in 25 years.⁷

It's time to help New York kids start college early and finish college strong

Funding early college high schools is good for New York's economy and for New York's most disadvantaged students, giving them a the jumpstart into college. State lawmakers should support this smart and sensible policy.

1 The New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) helps eligible New York residents pay tuition at approved schools in New York State. TAP recipients are typically students from low-income and disadvantaged families. For more information, please visit: http://www.hesc.com/content.nsf/SFC/About_TAP

2 <http://m.nysenate.gov/legislation/bill/S5647-2011>

3 <http://m.nysenate.gov/legislation/bill/S5647-2011>

4 The Early College High School Initiative (ECHI) is sponsored by Jobs for the Future and seeks to expand early college high schools across the country. Since 2002, ECHI has helped start or redesign 270 early college schools, which serve more than 75,000 students in states across America. For more information, please visit: <http://www.earlycolleges.org/>

5 <http://www.earlycolleges.org/overview.html#how5>

6 http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/Unconventional_Wisdom_PDF_033011.pdf

7 http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/APA_ECHS_ROI_071906.pdf