ECHS in Comprehensive High Schools — Implementation Supports

- Comprehensive High Schools
- Impacts
- Implementation Supports
- The Model
- Publications

ECHS in Comprehensive High Schools —

Implementation Supports

Implementation of early college principles in comprehensive high schools is a challenging process. Each project provided schools with a set of supports that were intended to help districts and college implement the Early College Design Principles. These are the types of activities that districts or organizations would provide to schools.

In this table, project supports are organized based on implementation science framework (which focuses on the process for supporting the implementation of interventions). In a synthesis of literature on implementation frameworks, Meyers, Durlak, & Wandersman (2012) identified four stages of implementation support:

- Stage 1: initial considerations about host settings
- Stage 2: creating a structure for implementation
- Stage 3: ongoing implementation and support
- Stage 4: feedback and learning

The first column in the table below describes indicators identified in the literature or categories of activities implemented across the projects. The remainder of the table shows how these supports were conceptualized and implemented in four projects that expanded early college strategies in comprehensive high schools.

PREPARATION OF THE HOST SETTING

Project Supports	NC iRIS	ECEP	SECEP	CCRE
Site selection	Schools were recruited because they were in rural and low-wealth districts, had successful early colleges in the district, and exhibited an interest in early college.	Districts were selected based on their prior goals and student population underrepresented in college. Each district selected its participating schools. Denver had an application process.	Most districts were selected based on serving a student population underrepresented in college, their prior goals, and their commitment towards implementation of early college. Michigan had a formal Request for Proposal process.	Most districts were selected based on serving a student population underrepresented in college and were asked to commit to implementation of early college.
Defining the intervention clearly	Logic model was in place. Intervention was defined by six Design Principles articulated in a rubric that was used by schools. Fidelity of Implementation matrix was used to track implementation of supports.	Logic model was in place. Intervention was defined by four Design Elements and the project logic model. The Common Instructional Framework was defined by a rubric used by coaches. Fidelity of Implementation matrix was used to track implementation of supports.	Logic model was in place. Intervention was defined by four Design Principles as laid out in a rubric used by schools. Fidelity of Implementation matrix was used to track implementation of supports.	Logic model was in place. Intervention was defined by four Design Principles as shown in logic model, but no rubric was used. Fidelity of Implementation matrix was used to track implementation of supports.
Conduct needs and capacity assessments			Proposal preparation included discussions between project and site leaders about districts' needs and capacity necessary for project implementation.	

Initial capacity-building/buy-in	Projects started with Summer Institute, principal professional development (LEAD), a New Principal Institute and New Teacher Institute.	Project started with Kick-off meetings in all three districts.	Project started with the National Middle College National Consortium Conference.	Project started with Principals' Workshop and two national conferences to get principals on board.
Identification of appropriate staff	Principals were designated as leaders for each school.	Each district designated a person to lead the project. Principals or AP were designated as leaders for each school. Texas schools had Early College Directors.	Each district (collaborative) designated a person to lead the project. Principals or AP were designated as leaders for each school.	The project paid for a district coordinator to lead the project.

CREATING STRUCTURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Project Supports	NC iRIS	ECEP	SECEP	CCRE
Development of a strategic plan	Leadership coaches worked with school principals on a strategic planning process.	Project provided districts with technical assistance around strategic planning.	Project provided template and assistance to districts to create and update annual strategic plans.	Project provided districts with a common planning template.

Establishment of and technical assistance to regularly functioning implementation leadership teams	Not an original emphasis of the project. Project staff did meet with school teams at least twice to conduct reviews of Design Principles.	In the two Texas Districts, each district had and ECEP Cabinet to coordinate ECEP efforts within the district. In Denver, the ECEP work was integrated into regular district meetings.	Each district had a SECEP team to coordinate the work. Project helped school-level leadership teams to guide the work.	District representatives participated in regular meetings of two different leadership teams at the cross-district level to lead the project work.
Creating and supporting structures and MoUs for sustained district-college collaboration	Project staff helped districts and partner colleges create MoUs and develop collaborative structures.	Relationships with colleges focused on college access, pathways, and, in Texas, on sharing data.	Project helped districts and partner colleges establish MoUs and build collaborative structures to support dual enrollment coursetaking and pathways.	College partner led the project and provided supports to districts around dual enrollment coursetaking, pathways, and data analyses.
Technical assistance and resources for curriculum development		In Denver, project staff piloted a middle school college readiness curriculum.	Project staff developed a middle school college readiness curriculum and assisted with development of high school-college pathways.	College partner developed and offered credit-bearing college success course to prepare students for future postsecondary classes. College partner assisted in development of pathways.

ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPPORT, CAPACITY BUILDING

Project Supports	NC iRIS	ECEP	SECEP	CCRE

Coaching, professional development, and technical assistance to district staff	Emphasis was on school staff; however, district staff were provided with professional development including invitations to Texas study visits and participating in School Support Team meetings.	Project staff trained district-based instructional coaches, assisted with strategic planning and in aligning resources to support the ECEP work, provided resources, and established postsecondary partnerships.	Project staff worked with district staff on planning, reviewing data, and monitoring implementation through individual and team meetings and during project-related workshops.	The project partners provided customized technical assistance and coaching to district staff members and supported professional development on project-related topics.
Professional development for school staff	Project staff offered a specific menu of professional development opportunities related to the Design Principles. School staff could choose from this menu.	Professional growth was primarily provided through coaching (see below). In Texas, the project created a Professional Development Specialist position to support individual teachers and plan school-wide professional development. Districts created professional development opportunities for principals and school teams.	Project provided common professional development for districts through regular conferences. Districts and schools could identify additional professional development according to needs.	Project partners provided professional development opportunities aligned to project needs. District could choose from these or select other trainings. Additionally, project staff provided professional development targeted at adjunct faculty teaching dual enrollment courses. Districts also provided professional development to school staff.

On-site coaching for school staff	Project staff provided an average of 18 days of leadership coaching to principals annually. Instructional coaches worked with interested teachers on instructional practices for an estimated 76 days of coaching annually.	Project staff provided coaching to school leadership with an expected number of 22 consultations annually. In Denver, district based coaches provided instructional coaching to teachers. In Texas, project staff provided direct coaching to teachers and also developed capacity of district coaches to continue the work.	In CT, project staff provided leadership coaching to principals and instructional coaching to teachers. In MI, district staff provided SECEP coaching to principals and/or teachers according to school needs. High schools received an average of 18 days of coaching annually.	The provider of coaching (project staff or district staff) differed by district. Project or district staff provided coaching to school leadership (average of 9 visits annually). Project or district staff provided instructional coaching directly to teachers (average of 8 visits annually).

Networking opportunities	Project staff provided networking opportunities for principals and teachers through the summer conference and through additional networking sessions held throughout the year. They also created an online community of practice.	Project staff created an online Community of Practice (COP) where resources and ideas could be shared across states and districts. The project staff conducted a National Early College Conference in one year and supported attendance at a local early college conference in other years.	Project staff created an online Community of Practice (COP) where resources and ideas could be shared across states and districts. Participants attended the Middle College National Consortium national conference. In MI, schools were part of the state network.	Leadership of participating schools and districts networked through Cabinet meetings; teachers networked at common professional development events.
Supports for sustainability	Planning for sustainability began in the 3rd year of the project. Additional grant funding was sought for some of the schools to continue.	Planning for sustainability began in the 3rd year of the project. All three districts developed a sustainability plan.	Planning for sustainability began in the 2nd-3rd year of the project. Additional funding beyond the grant period was sought out from community organizations.	Project was part of a regional development strategy. Project staff worked with districts to identify additional resources to sustain the work beyond the grant period.

ONGOING FEEDBACK AND LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

Project Supports	NC iRIS	ECEP	SECEP	CCRE

Incorporating ongoing feedback	Project staff collected ongoing feedback through leadership team meetings, network meetings, and coaching visits.	Project staff collected ongoing feedback through Cabinet meetings, site visits to schools, coaching/step-back meetings, and district meetings.	Project staff collected ongoing feedback through leadership team meetings, site visits to schools, and student surveys. Additionally, project staff helped school leadership with interpreting collected data.	Project staff collected ongoing feedback through leadership team meetings. During Year 3, leadership team meetings focused on three areas using a Plan-Do-Study-Act continuous improvement framework.
Formal evaluation	External evaluators provided frequent informal feedback and yearly reports based on records analyses, staff surveys, and interviews with district and school staff and students.	External evaluators provided frequent informal feedback and yearly reports based on records analyses, staff surveys, and interviews with district and school staff and students.	External evaluators provided frequent informal feedback and yearly reports based on records analyses, staff surveys, and interviews with district and school staff.	External evaluators provided frequent informal feedback and yearly reports based on records analyses, staff surveys, and interviews with district and school staff.