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**To:** Alaska Senate and House Education Committees  
**From:** Marilyn Villalobos, Research Analyst II, NCSL  
**Date:** 11/13/18  
**Subject:** Middle and Early Colleges

I am a Research Analyst in NCSL's education program and I specialize in post-secondary topics such as, early and middle colleges, postsecondary governance, post-secondary funding models, campus safety, and undocumented student tuition.

NCSL is the bi-partisan organization for all legislators and staff of the nation's 50 states, territories and commonwealths. We are a trusted resource for comprehensive and unbiased research on state policies and legislative institutions.

I'm going to talk today largely about state efforts on middle and early colleges as an approach to create post-secondary pathways for student's success.

Early and Middle colleges are intended to increase the high school and college success of low income, first generation, and at-risk students. I'll discuss the different policy approach that states have taken over the years to increase student success using middle colleges.

## **Middle Colleges**

### **Definitions:**

- a. Middle College High Schools are secondary schools, authorized to grant diplomas in their own name, located on college campuses across the nation. The Middle Colleges are small, with usually 100 or fewer students per grade level and they provide a rigorous academic curriculum within a supportive and nurturing environment to a student population that has been historically under-served and underrepresented in colleges. While at the Middle College, students have the opportunity to take some college classes at no cost to themselves.
- b. Early College High Schools are schools with all the characteristics of Middle Colleges – location on a college campus, strong academic program, supportive environment – and are designed to serve the same target population. Early Colleges also have a defined and structured program that enables the high school students to earn both their high school diplomas and their Associates Degree in 4 to 5 years with no cost to the student.
- c. Dual Enrollment high school students are able to take college courses, usually at nearby post-secondary institutions. Successful completion of the college-level course enables the student to obtain credit toward both the high school diploma and toward a college degree.

## **History of Middle Colleges**

The first middle college high school was established in 1974 at LaGuardia Community College in New York City.

- d. Combined the last two years of high school with the first two years of college
  - i. Provides students with:
    - 1. Intensive counseling
    - 2. Small classes
    - 3. Interdisciplinary curriculum
    - 4. Career guidance
- e. School designed for students who would flounder in a traditional high school setting.

## **Middle College National Consortium**

- a. Is a professional development organization for secondary and post-secondary public-sector educators. MCNC provides technical assistance and support for both new and established Middle College High Schools as they implement education reforms via MCNC's Design principles and engage in professional activities designed to help under-performing students meet high academic standards.
- b. Schools partnered with MCNC
  - i. Approximately- 40 schools on college campuses across 16 states (include public and charter schools) All schools are affiliated and located on or near college campuses.
    - 1. California (13)
    - 2. Colorado (3)
    - 3. Connecticut (1)
    - 4. Illinois (2)
    - 5. Louisiana (1)
    - 6. Maryland (1)
    - 7. Michigan (6)
    - 8. Nevada (1)
    - 9. New York (5)
    - 10. North Carolina (1)
    - 11. Ohio(1)
    - 12. Pennsylvania (1)
    - 13. South Carolina (3)
    - 14. Tennessee (2)
    - 15. Texas (4)
    - 16. Washington (1)

## **Statistics**

- 93% of early/middle colleges students graduate high school vs. National rate of 78%
- 94% of early/middle college graduates earn college credit for free
- 23% of graduates earn a post-secondary credential along with their high school diploma
- 76% of graduates enroll in college vs. the national rate of 68 percent
- 77% of early/middle college students are students of color
- 57 % of early/middle college students are from low-income families

(Source: Jobs for the Future)

## **State Information**

### **California**

California Education Code (EC) Section 11300 declares that Middle College High Schools (MCHS) have proven to be a highly effective collaborative effort between local school districts and community colleges. The basic elements of MCHS include:

- A curriculum that focuses on college and career preparation
- Reduced adult-student ration
- Flexible scheduling
- Opportunities for experimental internships, work apprenticeships and community service.

### **Connecticut**

#### **Connecticut Early College Experience**

UConn Early College Experience (ECE) is an opportunity for students to take UConn courses while still in high school. Every UConn ECE course is equivalent to the same course at the University of Connecticut. There are approximately fifty courses in over twenty disciplines made available to partner high schools. Courses are taught on the high school campus by high school instructors who have been certified as adjunct faculty members by the University of Connecticut. UConn ECE students benefit by taking college courses in a familiar setting with an instructor they know. Courses offered through UConn ECE are approximately one-tenth of the cost in comparison to taking the same course on a UConn campus.

Enacted [House Bill 5478](#) (2018)

The Connecticut Employment and Training Commission shall develop, in collaboration with the Connecticut state colleges and universities, Department of Education, and regional work force development boards established pursuant to section 31-3j, a state-wide plan for implementing, expanding or improving upon career certificate programs established under section 10-20a, middle college programs, early college high school programs and Connecticut Early College Opportunity programs to provide education, training and placement in jobs available in the manufacturing, health care, construction, green, science, technology, engineering and mathematics industries and other emerging sectors of the state's economy. Such plan shall include a proposal to fund such programs

### **Florida**

#### **Dual Enrollment Policies**

1007.217 (1) The dual enrollment program is the enrollment of an eligible secondary student or home education student in a postsecondary course creditable toward high school completion and a career certificate or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

1007.217 (3) The Department of Education shall adopt guidelines designed to achieve comparability across school districts of both student qualifications and teacher qualifications for dual enrollment courses. Student qualifications must demonstrate readiness for college-level coursework if the student is to be enrolled in college courses. Student qualifications must demonstrate readiness for career-level coursework if the student is to be enrolled in career courses.

#### **“Early Admissions Program” Policy**

1007.271 “(7) Early admission shall be a form of dual enrollment through which eligible secondary students enroll in a postsecondary institution on a full-time basis in courses that are creditable toward the high school diploma and the associate or baccalaureate degree. Students enrolled pursuant to this subsection shall be exempt from the payment of registration, tuition, and laboratory fees.

1007.271 (8) Career early admission is a form of career dual enrollment through which eligible secondary students enroll full time in a career center or a community college in courses that are creditable toward the high school diploma and the certificate or associate degree. Participation in the career early admission program shall be limited to students who have completed a minimum of 6 semesters of full-time secondary enrollment, including studies undertaken in the ninth grade. Students enrolled pursuant to this section are exempt from the payment of registration, tuition, and laboratory fees.”

### **Michigan**

#### **Dual Enrollment**

“The Michigan State Legislature passed Public Act 160 of 1996, the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act and Public Act 258 of 2000, the Career and Technical Preparation Act also known as the "Dual Enrollment" bills. These bills modify and expand on provisions of the State School Aid Act providing for students to earn college credit while in high school. The bills also require that the board of a school district or public school academy ensure that each student in eighth grade or higher be given information about college course taking opportunities. The classes that students are eligible for must not be offered by the high school or academy and must lead towards postsecondary credit, accreditation, certification and/or licensing.”

The Dual Enrollment laws do not alone prescribe a specific course of study but allow for certain types of courses to be taken when eligibility requirements are met.

#### **Early Middle Colleges**

EMCs are structured programs that use the flexibility with the Dual Enrollment laws to provide a specific and deliberately designed course of study that will result in earning 60 transferable college credits. These credits can be used toward a four-year degree from a Michigan public or private university, an advanced certificate, an associate degree from a community college, or a MEMCA technical certificate or a professional certification.

- Michigan Early Middle College Association (MEMCA)
  - o Michigan Early Middle College Association (MEMCA) is a voluntary alliance of educators actively involved with one or more of the Early Middle Colleges working towards significantly increasing the collegiate and post-secondary success and completion rate of Michigan youth. The group

comes together to share best practices, develop a community of learners and reflective practitioners, and share research with the broad high school transformation community.

- MEMCA serves in a leadership capacity by providing assistance to Early Middle Colleges throughout the state. This is accomplished by working closely with the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Career and Technical Education, and other public and private agencies and institutions.
- [Statue 388.1661B](#)
  - 8 millions dollars allocated each fiscal year for CTE early/ middle colleges and dual enrollment programs. Planning grants for the development or expansion of CTE early/middle colleges
  - Collaborate with the career and educational advisory council to develop a regional strategic plan that aligns CTE programs and services into an efficient and effective delivery system for high school students

## **Tennessee**

### **Tennessee policy**

- Students enrolled in middle college high schools are funded at the same level as students enrolled in traditional high schools
- If program is funded through local, state or federal funds appropriated to a local education agency, then no fee shall be charged by the local education agency or a public postsecondary institution to any student participating in such program.

## **Texas**

### **2003 [TX SB 976](#)**

Sec. 29.908 MIDDLE COLLEGE EDUCATION PILOT PROGRAM.

The commissioner shall establish and administer a middle college education pilot program for students who are at risk of dropping out of school or who wish to accelerate high school completion. For purposes of this section, "student at risk of dropping out of school" has the meaning assigned by Section 29.081.

The program must:

1. Provide for a course of study that enables a participating student to combine high school courses and college-level courses during grade levels 11 and 12
2. Allow a participating student to complete high school and receive at least a high school diploma and associate degree at the time of graduation;
3. Include articulation agreements under Subchapter T, Chapter 61, with colleges, universities, and technical schools in this state to provide a participating student access to postsecondary educational and training opportunities on the campus of the college, university, or technical school; and
4. Provide a participating student flexibility in class scheduling and academic mentoring.

**2005 [TX SB 1146](#)**

**29.908- Early College Education Program**

The commissioner shall establish and administer an early college education program for students who are at risk of dropping out of school or who wish to accelerate completion of the high school program.

The program must:

1. Provide for a course of study that enables a participating student to combine high school courses and college-level courses during grade levels 9 through 12
2. Allow a participating student to complete high school and receive a high school diploma and either an associate's degree or at least 60 semester credit hours toward a BA degree.
3. Include articulation agreements with colleges, universities, and technical schools in this state to provide a participating student access to post-secondary educational training opportunities at a college, university, or technical school
4. Provide a participating student flexibility in class scheduling and academic mentoring.

Thank you for your time today, I am happy to answer questions or provide any additional follow-up information.

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