Early College Program

Collaborating with High Schools to Enhance Student Success
What is Early College?

The Early College Program allows select, qualified students from area high schools to earn both their high school diploma and work towards a college degree by attending Kankakee Community College full time during their senior year of high school. The Early College Program provides an opportunity for students to work in a more challenging educational environment and to excel academically while completing high school and college requirements. An important aspect of the Early College program requires students to be both academically and socially ready for college. Benefits of the Early College Program include:

- Shortening the amount of time needed for students to complete a college degree.
- Reducing the overall expense of college tuition
- Improving articulation linking high school and college curricula
- Providing an alternative educational environment for talented high school students
- Providing a transition into college
- Providing access to coursework not offered at the high school

However, the decision to begin college early is an important one. It is important to consider each student’s maturity level in making choices about educational options. Although a student may be academically prepared for college level coursework, he/she may find the demands of college extremely overwhelming. Student success requires motivated individuals who work independently, take initiative, have good study skills, and are able to responsibly complete assignments throughout the semester.

Parents and students should give careful consideration to the appropriateness of this program before enrolling. Students are starting a permanent college transcript by taking their college courses through the Early College Program. High school and college advisors are available to discuss the many options available. Each option has strengths and limitations.
Program Strengths

- Students have the opportunity to take courses that may not be offered at their local high schools.
- Academically prepared students have an opportunity to get a head start on taking college level courses and earning high school and college credits simultaneously.
- Students have an opportunity to experience post-secondary education while in high school, easing the transition from high school to college and making future educational and career plans more realistic.
- Students who have difficulty fitting into a traditional high school setting may flourish in a different educational setting.
- In college, high school students gain maturity and knowledge from the participation and diversity of other college students and upper level courses.

Program Limitations

- Some academically qualified students may not be ready socially or emotionally for the college environment. They may find the independence and the speed of some college classes overwhelming.
- High schools provide a social network and social development experiences for teenagers which are not as accessible at the college level.
- College schedules may conflict with high school classes or extracurricular activities (sports, drama, clubs, etc.).
- The college academic calendar may operate differently from the high school academic calendar. Holidays and vacation periods are frequently different. Students are expected to attend classes at the college even though their high schools may not be in session. Careful planning must occur in order to avoid conflicts with family, work, and school activities.
- If a student struggles in the Early College Program, this could affect his/her high school graduation requirements. For instance, if an Early College student withdraws from his/her courses, he/she will most likely have to wait until next semester to begin classes again at the home high school. In addition, some students may receive an unfavorable grade due to the increased challenges of college level course work. This also could affect a student’s high school credits and may result in the student needing to take make-up courses in order to receive his/her high school diploma.
- Competitive entry programs at KCC, such as the Registered Nursing Program, are NOT available to Early College students. Rather, their year in the program can be used to complete general education requirements needed for these programs. Once the students have their high school diplomas, they may then work with KCC academic advisors to apply to these programs.
Early College Program Enrollment Criteria

Once a student has decided to apply to the Early College Program, he/she must meet the minimum criteria outlined below. In addition, each individual high school holds the right to require additional qualifications for students interested in applying to the Early College Program.

- High school student must be entering 12th grade status
- Students must have a minimum high school cumulative GPA of 2.5
- Must be under the age of 19 as of September 1st of the school year in which the college course is taken
- Complete and submit the Early College Enrollment Packet
- Achieve appropriate levels on placement tests
- Waive all FERPA rights by signing and completing KCC’s Early College Program Release of Information Form that will provide the home high school, KCC, and parents/guardians with access to the student’s academic records
- Complete a required Early College Program KCC orientation session
- Agree to meet with KCC and high school counselors periodically throughout the semester
- Maintain KCC academic eligibility
- Enroll in and complete at least 12 credit hours per semester
- Draft a two-semester educational plan with the help of the KCC academic advisor and high school guidance counselor
- High school student must not have any discipline or attendance problems the previous year prior to application
- Agree to adhere to rules and regulations as outlined by KCC in The Code of Campus Affairs and Regulations.

Paying for the Early College Program

One of the major benefits to the Early College Program is the opportunity for students and their parents/guardians to save tuition expenses on potentially an entire year of college.

- Students have the opportunity to take courses that may not be offered at their local high schools.
- Once a student is accepted into the Early College Program, the student’s home high school will award an amount to the student’s account at Kankakee Community College. This award amount is typically no greater than the general student aid (GSA) allocations the home high school receives per student and no greater than the student’s Early College Program costs.
- Any college costs not covered by the high school award payment will be the responsibility of the student unless other arrangements have been made with the student’s home high school. For some students, the high school award payment may completely cover the students’ Early College costs. For others, depending on the number of credit hours in which the student enrolls, additional textbooks, etc., some balance may be due to KCC. Unless payment plans are previously arranged, any outstanding costs must be paid in full before the beginning of the upcoming semester.
- The money credited to the student’s account will first be applied to the student’s course tuition and fees. The remaining funds may then be applied to required textbooks. Students may only use the funds for new or used text books purchased through KCC’s Hammes Bookstore.
- The home school district will determine whether or not developmental courses will be covered within the award payment.
- Students are not eligible for Financial Aid (FASFA) through the government during their Early College Program participation, because they have not completed a high school diploma or GED.
Guidelines for the Early College Student

Once students begin attending college, they will be considered “regular” college students. The faculty will expect the same level of classroom participation and quality of work from all students. Students will be expected to meet class deadlines, be prepared for class, ask questions, and conduct themselves as responsible adults. If students are having difficulty or need additional assistance, it is their responsibility to seek out the instructor. Instructors keep posted office hours when students can come to see them for help or discussion.

Attendance – Early College students will be required to report weekly attendance and grade updates to a designated representative at Kankakee Community College. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. At the end of each class period, the Early College student is responsible for obtaining the instructor’s signature to verify attendance on the specific Attendance Form provided by KCC. A separate form requesting grade updates will also be the student’s responsibility to have completed by instructors. At the end of each week, the Early College student will submit these reports to the designated KCC representative in order for him/her to report these updates back to the student’s home high school.

If an Early College student is unable to attend class due to sickness, etc., the student must notify the KCC representative in advance. Some professors take attendance every day and include it in the final grade, while others do not. Even when attendance is not included in the final grade, the student should still attend class. The Early College student should place attendance as a first priority and ensure that his/her schedule allows the student to attend every class for which he/she is registered.

Withdrawing/Dropping a Class – Withdrawing from a class may have serious implications on a student’s high school graduation status. To withdraw from a class, students must obtain and fill out the correct form from the college office. A copy of this form should be given to the high school counselor and/or Early College advisor. Many students believe that if they simply stop attending, they will be withdrawn from the course; this is NOT true as they must officially withdraw by filling out the correct form and informing the proper officials.

Class Pace – The academic pace of college classes is usually faster than in high school. For example, a high school math class that is taught in one year at the high school is taught in one semester at the college. There is little time for faculty to stop and review lessons for students who do not understand the material or were absent from class. However, faculty members encourage students to come to their offices for individual help. KCC also provides free tutoring for students.

Homework – The Early College student needs to be prepared to study on average two to three hours outside of class for every hour in class. If the student is enrolled in 15 credit hours, the student is expected to spend 30 to 45 hours outside of class studying each week.

Class Size – Classes can vary in size from 10 to 25 students.

Class Participation – This is an integral part of college and many professors require students to participate in classroom discussions. Professors will provide a syllabus at the beginning of the semester outlining their expectations. It is the student’s responsibility to understand and follow through with these expectations.
Guidelines for the Early College Student (cont.)

Grade Reports – Each high school will receive grade reports for their Early College students and will, in turn, post these credits/grades on each student’s high school transcript according to Board of Education guidelines.

Academic Records – Students successfully completing classes through the Early College program will receive both high school and college credit. Grades received become part of their permanent college transcript.

Academic Standards – Students face dismissal or sanctions from Kankakee Community College if they are academically deficient. Students should review the Code of Campus Affairs and Regulations section in the college catalog.

Parent’s Access to Student Records – It is the policy of Kankakee Community College to regard Early College students as “regular college students”. The college is an adult learning community and students are treated accordingly. The college is not allowed to give information regarding a student’s attendance or progress to parents without the student’s written permission. In addition, faculty will not discuss the student’s progress without written permission. All Early College students are required to complete a FERPA waiver to participate within the program. As a result, all student records will be available to parents and high school guidance counselors.

Transferring to Another College or University – College credits are transferable to other post-secondary institutions in the state, according to the guidelines of each institution. It is important for students to consult with college admissions representatives and university advisors as early as possible.

Students with Disabilities – KCC can provide some accommodations to special needs students accepted into the Early College Program. However, at the college level, KCC cannot guarantee the student will receive all the same services he/she receives at the high school level. In addition, the student must be his/her own self advocate and make sure he/she communicates with appropriate KCC contacts if he/she is a special needs student. KCC’s Office of Disability Services can help review a student’s IEP, and discuss what services the college can provide.
Early College Program – FAQ’s

Is Early College just for baccalaureate-bound students?
No, the Early College Program can be utilized for baccalaureate bound students, those interested in our occupational programs, and/or those merely interested in attending KCC rather than their home high school their senior year.

How is senior standing determined?
It is the responsibility of the school district to establish senior standing. Any criteria used to establish grade placement must be applied uniformly to all students.

If an Early College student withdraws from the college, can the high school prohibit the student from returning to the high school?
No. It is the responsibility of the high school to provide an education for students residing in the district.

When a student in Early College drops a class at the college, and receives a “W” on their college transcript, will the high school post the grade as an “F” on the high school transcript?
It must be posted as a “W” on the high school transcript.

May Early College students participate in high school activities, organizations, and clubs?
Yes. Early College students may participate in any high school activities, organizations, or clubs as permitted by the high school. For those students participating in high school sports, the student must meet and maintain IHSA eligibility requirements as monitored by the high school.

May Early College students participate in KCC activities, organizations, and clubs?
Early College students may participate in activities, organizations and clubs, but may not participate in intercollegiate sports at Kankakee Community College.
May the parent of an Early College student request attendance and grade information from Kankakee Community College?

Yes. Early College students are required to sign a Release of Information Form which allows all information to be shared with their parents or guardians while in the program.

May Early College students participate in field trips that are scheduled as part of the college course?

Yes, but written parental permission must be obtained for students under the age of 18 for all field trips.

Does participating in the Early College Program affect Valedictorian, Salutatorian, or class rank status and/or additional scholarship opportunities?

Participation in the Early College Program may affect a student’s class rank depending on the process of the student’s home high school. In addition, students that complete 24 semester hours or more through the program, are now considered college transfer students rather than high school graduates which could affect potential scholarship opportunities. Students interested in the program should discuss this with their high school guidance counselor to make sure the Early College Program is the right choice.

For more information on KCC Early College Program, contact:
Kim Harpin, Director of Support Services at kharpin@kcc.edu • 815.802.8472 or
Dr. Michael Boyd, Vice President of Instructional and Student Success at mboyd@kcc.edu • 815.802.8360

For additional information, visit www.kcc.edu and select the “Future Students” link in the upper right hand corner of the web page.
Early College Student Checklist

1. Schedule an appointment with your high school counselor to read program information and determine your potential eligibility for Early College.

2. If interested and eligible, students should continue to work with their high school counselor to complete The Early College Program Enrollment Package which includes all forms listed below.
   - High School Application for Early College
   - College Enrollment Recommendation Form for High School Students
   - Release of Information Form – FERPA
   - High School Transcript
   - Placement Scores—Please include ACT scores on high school transcript if using them in place of COMPASS scores. If student does not have ACT scores he/she will be required to test COMPASS prior to apply to the program. Please contact Kim Harpin for testing information at 815-802-8472.
   - A list of courses from the high school guidance counselor listing all courses the student needs to complete during the senior year in order to fulfill high school graduation requirements

3. Return the complete Early College Program Enrollment Package to Kim Harpin at KCC by March 3, 2017. In turn, KCC will verify admission to the Early College Program with the student and appropriate high school counselor.

4. The student should make an initial advisement appointment with Kim Harpin by calling 815-802-8472. At this appointment, the student’s course plan will be created based on the student’s test scores, courses needed for high school graduation credit, and student’s intended major or college plans for the enrolling fall and spring semesters.

5. Students should verify the selected course plan with their high school guidance counselor to ensure all courses necessary for high school graduation requirements are accounted for in the student’s course plan.

6. Register for courses and make payment arrangements.

7. Complete KCC’s Early College Program orientation.

8. With the assistance of KCC staff, purchase textbooks and supplies prior to the first day of class.
High School Application for Early College

Date: ____________________ Name: ____________________________________

Last                                         First                                    Middle initial

Address: ________________________________

Street/PO Box                         City                           State                Email address

Telephone: ___________________________ ___________________________

Home                                               Cell

Birth date: ________________________________

Attention parent/guardian: – Please read and initial each numbered item below. Your initials signify you have read and agree to the listed requirements of the Early College program for your student.

___  1. The high school is the final authority on high school graduation requirements. Students must work closely with a high school counselor to ensure graduation requirements are met.

___  2. It is understood that it is the student’s responsibility to ensure college courses completed as part of the Early College Program will also meet high school graduation requirements.

___  3. The student and/or parent/guardian are responsible for all Early College costs not covered by the General State Aid (GSA) for the home high school. The GSA must be used for tuition and books. In addition, the student is responsible for all consumable supplies, transportation, and any other related educational expenses.

___  4. The student gives permission for the college to release grades and give information to his/her high school administrators and parents and waives all FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974) rights.

___  5. The parent/guardian and the student understand the student is expected to participate fully in all course activities, including labs.

___  6. The parent/guardian also understands that in some courses, the student may be exposed to alternative viewpoints and material of an adult nature.

___  7. The parent/guardian and student understand the high school is not liable for the student’s health and safety when the student has left the high school campus.

___  8. Student agrees to attend KCC orientation and meet with an academic advisor at least three times per semester.

___  9. Student agrees to maintain KCC academic eligibility to remain in the Early College Program. The student understands the failure to maintain KCC academic eligibility may result in the dismissal from the Early College Program and that said dismissal may result in the student not graduating from high school.

___ 10. Student agrees to enroll in and complete a minimum of 12 college credit hours per semester.

___ 11. Student agrees to complete all high school graduation requirements.

My signature on this form constitutes acceptance and approval of the statements listed above.

_________________________    ____________________    ___________________________    ____________________
Student signature            Date            Parent Signature             Date

The student is enrolled at _________________ High School, is under the age of 19 as of September 1st of the school year that the college course will be taken, and will comply with the State Board of Education and community college’s requirements.

_________________________    ____________________    ___________________________    ____________________
High School Counselor Signature             Date            Principal Signature             Date
Kankakee Community College
College Enrollment Recommendation for Early College Program

This form must be completed before enrollment. An official school transcript must be submitted with this form for general enrollment. Completion of this recommendation does not guarantee enrollment. KCC may request additional documentation if necessary.

Kankakee Community College provides the opportunity for students who are 16 years and older to enroll in college credit courses prior to graduating from high school. These students must abide by all college regulations, requirements, and standards as other KCC students and will be awarded the same credit.

Admission to the college does not ensure admission to selective admission programs or limited enrollment courses. Students may be required to enroll in specific courses based upon assessment scores and/or previous academic background. There is no general application fee.

Please check all applicable boxes and complete all applicable questions. Submit completed form to Kankakee Community College, 100 College Drive, Kankakee, IL 60901. Incomplete forms may be returned.

Anyone who has previously submitted an Admissions Form and/or enrolled in college credit courses does not need to complete this form. Please visit the registration counter in the Student Services office to determine whether or not any additional forms are necessary to complete your student file.

Today’s date ____/____/_____ Term applying for: Fall 20____ Spring 20____ Summer 20____

PLEASE PRINT.

Legal name: ___________________________________________ LAST ___________ FIRST ___________ MIDDLE (FULL) ___________ 

Social Security no.: ____________________________ Birth date: ____/____/_____ 

Street address: ___________________________________________ Apt. no.: ___________ PO Box: ___________

City: __________________________________ State: _____ ZIP code: ___________ County: _______________________

Primary phone: ___________________________ Alternate phone: ___________________________

☐ Home ☐ Cell ☐ Work: ___________________________________________ ☐ Home ☐ Cell ☐ Work: ___________________________________________

E-mail address (optional): ___________________________________________

*Once received, your Social Security number (SSN) will be replaced by a random seven digit ID number, which will be considered your college ID. Your SSN will be stored in a single secured location as required by college policy and will not be used for internal college business.

Do both of your parent(s)/guardian(s) have a four-year degree?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you Hispanic or Latino? (or, are you of Spanish origin?)

☐ Yes, Hispanic or Latino ☐ Not Hispanic or Latino

Are you from one or more of the following racial groups? (Select all that apply.)

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

☐ Asian ☐ White ☐ Choose not to respond

☐ Black or African-American ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

☐ Hispanic or Latino ☐ White ☐ Choose not to respond

Please identify your primary racial/ethnic group. (Select one.)

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

☐ Asian ☐ White ☐ Choose not to respond

☐ Black or African-American ☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ Not U.S. citizen, not in U.S. on a visa Provide home country of origin: ___________________________________________

☐ Not U.S. citizen, in U.S. on a visa Provide home country of origin: ___________________________________________

☐ U.S. citizen

☐ Not U.S. citizen, but permanent resident Provide home country of origin: ___________________________________________

☐ U.S. citizen, but in U.S. on a visa Provide home country of origin: ___________________________________________

U.S. citizenship status (Choose only one.)

☐ Male ☐ Female

Are you a legal resident* of KCC District 520?

☐ Yes ☐ No

*Consult current KCC catalog for residency policy

Anticipated graduation date: ___________ (mo./yr.)

ACT or COMPASS scores at acceptable levels are required for admission to certain programs or courses. Have you completed either test?

☐ Yes ☐ No Date completed: Month___________ Year______

Last high school attended _______________________________ City ______________________ State ________

Provide home country of origin: ___________________________________________
To our knowledge, the information contained in this application is true. We hereby grant Kankakee Community College permission to obtain a copy of the named student’s high school records. We grant permission for Kankakee Community College to release a copy of the named student’s transcript, assessment scores and course progress to the high school and/or parent/guardian upon request. We acknowledge that we are responsible for any/all financial obligations related to the course(s). We understand that the student must abide by all college regulations, requirements and procedures.

I understand that withholding information or giving false information on this application may make me ineligible for admission to Kankakee Community College or subject to dismissal. I certify that the information I have provided on this application is correct and complete.

Student signature  Date

Parent or guardian signature  Date

The student identified here is academically prepared, has met the course requirements and has the motivation to meet the demands of the rigor of college coursework. This student is recommended for enrollment in college credit classes at Kankakee Community College while concurrently enrolled in the school identified below.

School name  Date

Course(s) recommended or subject/area  ACT composite score  ACT English score  ACT math score

Signature of high school counselor

☐ Unofficial high school transcript has been attached
Date: _________________

Student’s name: ____________________________
                     Last name                      First name                      Middle initial

Mailing address: ____________________________________________________________
                     Street                      City                      Zip

The above student still needs the following high school course in order to fulfill high school graduation requirements:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________ _______________________
Signature of High School Guidance Counselor                                  Date

_______________________________________ _______________________
Signature of Student                                                              Date