



2016-2017

Application for ECHS Designation

ECHS Applicant: PSJA Elvis J. Ballew High School

Application ID: 218161358

The following benchmarks are the minimum required components that must be demonstrated through this application in order to be designated as an Early College High School. Please check the box by each requirement to indicate that the ECHS understands and will comply with the requirement. Application information that contradicts these assurances, or evaluation information that indicates that the required provisions are not being met, could result in a campus being denied designation.

I. Target Population:

The Early College High School shall serve, or include plans to scale up to serve, students in grades 9 through 12 and shall target and enroll students who are at risk of dropping out of school as defined by the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and who might not otherwise go to college.

1. The ECHS recruitment and enrollment processes and requirements shall not exclude or discourage the enrollment of any of the subpopulations of at-risk students (as defined by PEIMS), including, but not limited to, students who are of limited English proficiency or who have failed a state administered assessment. Enrollment decisions shall not be based on state assessment scores, discipline history, teacher recommendations, or minimum grade point average (GPA).
2. The ECHS shall identify, recruit, and enroll subpopulations (in addition to those who are at risk as defined by PEIMS) that are historically underrepresented in college courses (e.g., first generation college goers, students of low socioeconomic status, African American, Hispanic.)
3. The ECHS shall clearly document recruitment and enrollment policies and practices, refining and improving them annually based on data reviews.
 - a. The ECHS shall make available to TEA their annual recruitment and enrollment policies and data.
 - b. Recruitment and enrollment processes (including marketing and recruitment plans, materials, and timelines) shall include input from key stakeholders; target appropriate student populations; and include regular activities to educate students, counselors, principals, parents, and school board and community members.

II. Partnership Agreement:

The ECHS must have a current, signed MOU that:

1. defines the partnership between the school district(s) and the IHE(s) and addresses topics including, but not limited to, the ECHS location; the allocation of costs for tuition, fees, textbooks; and student transportation,
2. states that the school district or charter in which the student is enrolled shall pay for tuition (for all dual credit courses, including retakes), fees (including TSI administration fees), and required textbooks to the extent those charges are not waived by the partner IHE;
3. defines an active partnership between the school district or charter and the IHE, which shall include joint decision-making procedures that allow for the planning and implementation of a coherent program across institutions; and
4. includes provisions and processes for collecting, sharing, and reviewing program and student data to assess the progress of the ECHS.

III. P-16 Leadership Initiatives:

The school district and institute of higher education (IHE) partners shall develop and maintain a leadership team that meets regularly to address issues of design and sustainability. Membership should include the Early College High School principal/director and individuals with decision-making authority from the district(s) and IHE(s).

1. The ECHS shall establish a leadership team that includes high-level personnel with decision-making authority who meet regularly and report to each organization. Regularly scheduled meetings must address the following topics:
 - Identifying the members and the role each member will play in the design, governance, operations, accountability, curriculum development, professional development, outreach, sustainability, and continuous monitoring and improvement of the ECHS
 - Reviewing the MOU for necessary revisions
 - Sharing responsibility (between the school district and the IHE) for developing annual reports to district and IHE boards that provide data, highlight successes, and outline plan for improvement
2. Meeting minutes and agendas shall be publically available.

IV. Curriculum and Support:

The Early College High School (ECHS) shall provide a rigorous course of study that enables a participating student to receive a high school diploma and an associates degree or at least 60 credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree during grades 9-12. The ECHS shall provide students with academic, social, and emotional support in their course of study.

1. The ECHS shall provide a course of study that enables participating students to complete high school graduation requirements and either an associates degree or at least 60 semester credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree. An academic plan must be in place showing how students will progress toward this goal. The academic plan must provide pathways to a baccalaureate degree (core curriculum) and must follow the courses and fields of study listed in the THECB Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual. The ECHS is required to support students in their course of study.
2. The ECHS shall monitor student progress and report the number of hours completed per student, disaggregated by student groups.
- 3 The ECHS shall provide students with academic, social, and emotional support in their course of study.

V. Academic Rigor and Readiness:

The Early College High School shall administer a Texas Success Initiative (TSI) college placement exam (as defined by TAC Â§4.53) to all accepted students to assess college readiness, design individual instructional plans, and enable students to begin college courses based on their performance.

1. The ECHS shall provide a course of study that enables participating students to complete high school graduation requirements and either an associates degree or at least 60 semester credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree. An academic plan must be in place showing how students will progress toward this goal. The academic plan must provide pathways to a baccalaureate degree (core curriculum) and must follow the courses and fields of study listed in the THECB Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual. The ECHS is required to support students in their course of study.
 - a. The ECHS shall implement a plan for TSI success, including academic preparation classes for accepted students, academic interventions for students who do not pass TSI, and assessments fee waivers for all administrations of the TSI test.
 - b. The ECHS shall report to TEA the dates the TSI is administered.
 - c. The ECH shall report to TEA the number of students who have currently passed each section of the TSI assessment, including a breakdown of TSI testing data for subpopulations of targeted students.

VI. School Design:

The ECHS must provide a full-day program (i.e., full day as defined in PEIMS) at an autonomous high school (i.e., a high school with a principal or program coordinator assigned 100 percent to ECHS responsibilities who has scheduling, hiring, and budget authority), an IHE liaison with decision-making authority, and a highly qualified staff with support and training.

1. The ECHS location shall be:
 - on a college or university campus, or

- in a stand-alone high school campus or in a smaller learning community within a larger high school.
 - ECHS campuses not located on a college or university campus must provide students with regular use (at least six times per school year) of college academic facilities.
 - ECHS campuses located in a smaller learning community within a larger high school must disaggregate required ECHS student data.
- 2. ECHS required staffing include:
 - a principal, or program director who has scheduling, hiring, and budget autonomy;
 - an IHE liaison with decision-making authority who interacts directly and frequently with ECHS staff and administrators; and
 - highly qualified ECHS teachers who within four years will be reporting only to the ECHS principal/director and teaching only ECHS students in all core courses.
- 3. The ECHS students shall be enrolled in ECHS-only sections for core classes.
- 4. ECHS shall implement an annual professional development plan based on needs assessment of student data.

Contacts

PSJA Elvis J. Ballew High School - 218161358

1.1 ECHS Applying for Designation

ECHS Campus Name	PSJA Elvis J. Ballew High School	County District Campus Number	108909006
County District Campus Number 2	County District Campus Number 3		
CDC Number Use	☐ Shared With a Comprehensive Campus ☒ Belongs only to the ECHS		
Years Designated	1		
Application Status	Renewal: applying to renew designation on behalf of a provisionally designated ECHS.		
Mailing Address - Line 1	715 South Standard Ave.	Mailing Address - Line 2	
Mailing City	San Juan	Mailing Zip Code	78589

1.2 School District

District Name	Pharr- San-Juan- Alamo ISD		
Mailing Address - Line 1	601 E. Kelly Ave.	Mailing Address - Line 2	
Mailing City	Pharr	Mailing Zip Code	78577

1.2.a Second School District

District Name			
Mailing Address - Line 1			
Mailing City		Mailing Zip Code	

1.2.b Third School District

District Name			
Mailing Address - Line 1			
Mailing City		Mailing Zip Code	

1.3 Primary Institution of Higher Education (IHE) Partner

Partner Name	South Texas College		
Mailing Address - Line 1	3201 W. Pecan	Mailing Address - Line 2	
Mailing City	McAllen	Mailing Zip Code	78501
How many ECHS does this IHE partner with?	30		

1.3 Second Primary Institution of Higher Education (IHE) Partner

Partner Name			
Mailing Address - Line 1			
Mailing City		Mailing Zip Code	
How many ECHS does this IHE partner with?			

1.3 Third Primary Institution of Higher Education (IHE) Partner

Partner Name			
Mailing Address - Line 1			
Mailing City		Mailing Zip Code	
How many ECHS does this IHE partner with?	30		

1.4 Education Service Center Region

1

1.5 Person Completing this Application

Title	Mrs.	First Name	Larissa	Last Name	Saenz Mancha
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Contacts

PSJA Elvis J. Ballew High School - 218161358

Phone	9	Email	larissa.saenz@psjaisd.us
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1.6 ECHS Principal/Director

Title	Mrs.	First Name	Larissa	Last Name	Saenz Mancha
Phone	9563542520	Email	larissa.saenz@psjaisd.us		

1.7 Superintendent

First Name	Daniel	Last Name	King
Phone	9563542000	Email	drking@psjaisd.us

1.7.a Superintendent (District 2)

First Name	Daniel	Last Name	King
Phone	9563542000	Email	drking@psjaisd.us

1.7.b Superintendent (District 3)

First Name		Last Name	
Phone		Email	

1.8 Institution of Higher Education Liaison

First Name	Sofia	Last Name	Pena
Phone	9568722303	Email	sofia21@southtexascollege.edu

1.8.a Second Institution of Higher Education Liaison

First Name		Last Name	
Phone		Email	

1.8.b Third Institution of Higher Education Liaison

First Name		Last Name	
Phone		Email	

1.9 Authorized Institution of Higher Education Official

First Name	Shirley	Last Name	Reed
Phone	9568728311	Email	yolandao@southtexascollege.edu

1.9.a Second Authorized Institution of Higher Education Official

First Name		Last Name	
Phone		Email	

1.9.b Third Authorized Institution of Higher Education Official

First Name		Last Name	
Phone		Email	

ECHS Projected Enrollment: Show how the school has scaled up or will scale up by filling out the table below to indicate projected enrollment growth by year and grade level. If a grade level is not served, input 0 (zero).

Grades of students to be served:	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	Total Enrollment
2015-2016 enrollment	0	0	0	20	61	101	62	244
2016-2017 projected enrollment	0	0	0	20	65	105	65	255

Instructions:

In the "Percent of High School Students in District" column, use PEIMS data to indicate the percent of students for each demographic category currently enrolled in the district or charter school.

If the ECHS is not currently in operation, complete the district column and input a zero in each row in the ECHS column. This information will be submitted by provisional designation finalists to the TEA in the spring.

If the ECHS is not part of a second or third district partnership, please click the buttons at the top of their respective columns in order to auto-fill zeros into the boxes.

Demographics	Percent of High School Students in District	Percent of High School Students in Second District (if multi-district partnership)	Percent of High School Students in third District (if multi-district partnership)	Percent of All Students Enrolled in ECHS
Economically Disadvantaged	88	0	0	96
At-risk	78	0	0	98
LEP	44	0	0	53
White	0.6	0	0	1
Hispanic or Latino	99	0	0	99
Black or African-American	0.13	0	0	0
First Generation College-Goers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	0	0	0	0

Please indicate the subpopulations (in addition to those who are at risk as defined by PEIMS) that are historically underrepresented in college courses that your ECHS has identified to recruit and enroll.

☐First generation college-goer ☒Hispanic or Latino ☐Black or African-American ☒Economically Disadvantaged ☐Other

If other, please explain:

Please describe the recruitment and enrollment processes and requirements used by the ECHS. Please address how these processes and requirements facillitate the recruitment and enrollment of students who are at risk (as defined by PEIMS) or who are in the identified under-represented subpopulations.

Pharr-San Juan-Alamo (PSJA) ISD designed a personalized alternative campus – Elvis J. Ballew Early College High School (Ballew) – to meet the needs of students, ages 16-21, who are lacking high school credits and/or have not passed the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness End of Course (STAAR EOC) exams that will prevent these students from graduating on time. Given the increasing demands of education necessary to qualify for well-paying jobs, it is more important than ever for young people to finish high school and attain postsecondary education. PSJA Ballew ECHS is thought of as the “safety net” for the district to catch those students from falling through the cracks. PSJA Ballew ECHS is a school of choice and is submitting an application to continue to be designated as an Early College High School. Keeping in mind that these students are in greater danger of dropping out of high school, much less attending college, PSJA ISD is proposing the ECHS model will continue to target 100% of this "highly at-risk student population." Ninety-eight percent of the students at PSJA Ballew ECHS are at risk, as defined in PEIMS. It is the intent of Ballew ECHS that these students will graduate from high school, attend college while in high school, receive a college Certification of Completion, earn a stackable Associate of Applied Science degree, become core complete or earn up to 60 college hours. PSJA’s Public Relations Office assists PSJA Ballew ECHS with informational materials such as program literature, both in English and Spanish for students and parents, website information, the school district’s local channel (KTRI 17), and informational booths at campus registration sites. Counselors at all PSJA high schools advise their students of the option to enroll at PSJA Ballew ECHS if they meet the criteria. Literature for PSJA Ballew ECHS is made available to the counseling departments of the PSJA school district. PSJA Ballew ECHS conducts home visits all year long to target the subpopulation that is eligible to enroll at PSJA Ballew ECHS. The staff meets individually with students and parents and does a turn-key application to enroll them. PSJA Ballew ECHS is a school wide special purpose ECHS; therefore, every student who enrolls in this school of choice automatically qualifies as an ECHS student. PSJA Ballew ECHS supports all incoming students by providing sufficient ECHS program literature, educating the students and parents about the ECHS model, and encouraging eligible students to apply to PSJA Ballew ECHS. PSJA Ballew ECHS provides on-going orientations for students as soon as they enroll. The orientations are designed to provide students with information related, but not limited to: child care services, TSI preparation program, Level One Certificates of Completion and Associate of Applied

Science Degrees, a sequence of courses, grade point average information, STC student and academic support services. In addition, PSJA Ballew ECHS has developed an orientation program for students to inform them about the PSJA Ballew ECHS school model and its services.

Please describe how the recruitment and enrollment processes and requirements were developed and how they are analyzed, reviewed, and refined.

PSJA Ballew ECHS will be designed as a school wide ECHS. Enrollment will consist of special outreach initiatives to identify all students not on track for graduation in our schools and to inform them about the opportunity to enroll in this unique school of choice, ECHS. The ECHS enrollment processes and requirements shall not exclude or discourage the enrollment of any of the subpopulations of at-risk students. PSJA Ballew ECHS will have information for assessing the success of effective enrollment strategies by providing student, parent, teacher, STC adjunct instructor and community surveys.

Do the answers to the questions for Benchmark 1 meet the criteria for Exemplar recognition, and would you like TEA to consider your ECHS for this?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Do the answers to the questions for Benchmark 1 meet the criteria for Exemplar recognition, and would you like TEA to consider your ECHS for this?

PSJA Ballew ECHS goes above and beyond routine recruitment efforts to meet the needs of all qualifying PSJA ISD students. The district's comprehensive high schools routinely recommend students to Ballew ECHS and in addition Ballew ECHS staff conducts home visits all year long to target the subpopulation that is eligible to enroll at PSJA Ballew ECHS. Once an application is complete, the Ballew ECHS staff meets individually with each student and parent to review all expectations. PSJA Ballew ECHS supports all incoming students by providing sufficient ECHS program literature and educating the students and parents about the ECHS model, Included in these meetings with parents is information on the entire college going experience from Apply Texas, degree plans, career pathways, financial aid to all available support services. The district's Public Relations Office also ensures that Ballew ECHS is promoted on all informational materials such as program literature, both in English and Spanish for students and parents. Additional information about Ballew ECHS is made available on the campus website, the school district's local channel (KTRI 17), and informational booths at campus registration sites.

Early College High School campuses are required to have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is current and applicable to the 2015 -2016 school year. The following required topics must be addressed in the MOU. The following "highly recommended" topics should be considered for inclusion in the MOU. Please indicate the page number in the MOU where the topic is referenced.

Required MOU Topics	Page number in MOU where referenced
The location of the ECHS, allocation of costs and fees, and transportation	6
Administration of statewide instruments under Subchapter B, Chapter 39	4
Grading periods and policies	4
Courses of study	3
Curriculum alignment	3
Instructional materials	7
Instructional calendar	7
Policies regarding eligibility of ECHS students for higher education financial assistance, specifically assistance or waivers for tuition and fees.	7
Student enrollment and attendance policies	8
Provisions for discontinuing ECHS operation (see next section for details)	9
- Number of credit hours taken and earned - GPAs - State assessment results - SAT/ACT, PSAT scores - TSI readiness by grade level - Qualifications of ECHS staff - Location(s) where courses are taught	8

Highly recommended MOU Topics	Page number in MOU where referenced
Access to IHE facilities, services, and resources for ECHS students	6
Professional development for ECHS faculty (including both ISD and IHE faculty/staff)	6
Procedures for collecting and sharing student and teacher data	11
Policy regarding IHE advising students as to the transferability and applicability to baccalaureate degree plans of all college credit offered and earned	11
Policy to ensure the IHE transcripts college credit earned through dual credit in the same semester that credit is earned	10
Provisions for implementing program improvements based on the collection and review of the following data: - Articulation of high school students in four-year colleges/universities and level of entry - Enrollment/retention rates, leaver codes, and attrition rates, by grade level - Student participation in activities at IHE	9

Do the answers to the questions for Benchmark 2 meet the criteria for Exemplar recognition, and would you like the TEA to consider your ECHS for this?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Please provide additional information about the exemplar activities related to this benchmark below.

The partnership between PSJA ISD and the IHE (South Texas College) is regarded as one of the best professional relationships there is for our students. It is evident that there is constant communication and problem solving between both entities to support all the needs of our students. South Texas College shares information regarding higher education with all students, such as degree plans, credit hours earned and grade point averages. There is a data sharing agreement between the district and STC that is extremely helpful in the seamless transition of students to college after high school graduation. College tours are routinely scheduled and attendance is high. Our STC liaison is very involved in supporting the campus with selecting courses, reviewing student degree plans and consulting on teacher credentials.

P-16 Coordination and Communication

The ECHS shall establish a leadership team that includes high-level personnel with decision-making authority who meet regularly and report to each organization.

Please list the dates that this group met during the past school year in the format "mm/dd/yy".

September 25, 2014; October 28; November 30;
December 15; January 30, 2015; February 5; March

Please list the first and last names and titles of the group members. Fill all fields. Write "N/A" if someone of a specified title is not a member of the leadership team.

Title	Name
Superintendent	Dr. Daniel King
Cirriculum & Instruction or Equivalent	Dr. Leticia Pena
ECHS Principal or Director	Larissa S. Mancha
IHE President	Dr. Shirley Reed
IHE Provost	N/A
Dean of College of Education	N/A
ECHS Liaison	Sofia Pena
Deputy Superintendent	Narciso Garcia
Director of College Readiness	Guadalupe Chavez
Dean of Business & Technology	Mario Reyna

What are the functions of the group? Briefly summarize the topics/issues they have addressed, decisions they have made, and the accomplishments they are most proud of.

This Leadership Committee meets at least once a month. Some of the functions of the leadership group include the following:1.) the interpretation, review and update of the MOU, 2.) development and implementation of professional development opportunities for PSJA BALLEW ECHS teachers, 3.) evaluating data pertaining to recruitment, enrollment, retention, completion and transfer, 4.) evaluating PSJA BALLEW ECHS operations and identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, 5.) identifying areas of improvement and creating an outline to implement intervention strategies designed to increase student success, 6.) problem solving Texas Success Initiative (TSI) standards and how to prepare staff and students accordingly, 7.) develop a continuous orientation program that provides students with the preparation to be college ready for CTE courses, 8.) problem solving curriculum alignment between STC and PSJA BALLEW ECHS courses, and 9.) continuous training discussions regarding STC academic and student services and resources. The STC President serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the College and performs the overall management of the College. The STC Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) serves as the chief academic officer for STC and leads all academic and curriculum related programs. The VPAA is ultimately accountable for the quality of STC's academic educational programs. The Dean of Business and Technology is responsible and accountable for all district-wide activities and programs within the assigned instructional division. The STC Director for ECHS (DECHS) provides leadership, planning, coordination, implementation, daily operations and evaluation of all components of STC ECHSs. The STC ECHS Coordinator serves as the IHE Liaison. The Liaison provides leadership and direction to the ECHS programs by developing and implementing ECHS programmatic operations with ECHS partnerships. The PSJA ISD Superintendent acts as the chief executive officer of the district. The Deputy Superintendent has the responsibility of executing all academic district initiatives. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction (ASCI) has the responsibility for the educational programs that ensure focus on student growth. The Director for College Readiness (DCR) is responsible for providing support in the development of the ECHS program design. The Principal directs and manages the daily operation of PSJA BALLEW ECHS by budgeting and allocating resources to achieve learning goals, and evaluating program effectiveness. The goal of the campus is to produce high quality graduates with Level One Certificates that are stackable to an Associate's Degree, are core complete or earn 60 college credit hours. The school district pays tuition and fees, textbooks, daycare and transportation. PSJA has six full-time College Transition Specialists. Four of those specialists are stationed at STC and one is stationed at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. They serve as the connecting resource for ECHS students. These specialists help with the transition of our students, and there is also a Financial Aid Officer (FAO) who helps students to complete TSI requirements and apply for federal aid and scholarships. There is also an academic counselor who has received extensive training in all college advising responsibilities and is able to support the work of the transitional specialist and the FAO.

If the ECHS has identified and implemented sustainability structures to address and minimize the challenges of staff turnover, please describe those structures here. Otherwise, please fill in "N/A".

PSJA Elvis J. Ballew ECHS is involved with PSJA's New Teacher Training Institute. The institute assigns teacher mentors to teachers that have less than two years of teaching experience. The institute provides teachers with the professional development opportunities that support classroom management, teaching strategies, instructional round observations and other instructional support strategies designed to increase student success and completion. The Common Instructional Framework (CIF) model strategy allows for powerful learning and teaching and forms the basis of a coherent college preparatory curriculum. PSJA Elvis J. Ballew HS has a Campus Instructional Coach (IC) that provides support for teachers. The IC assists teachers in implementing the CIF model in their classroom and provides staff development opportunities. The Professional Learning Community model is also a support system for teachers which provide best practices, collaboration on instructional strategies and the opportunity to link PSJA teachers with STC instructors to discuss curriculum alignment, classroom management, instructional strategies and other academic classroom-related components. The Texas Incentive Fund (TIF) program is a system of support and evaluation for school level leaders designed to build high quality human capital. The goal is to make a difference in the quality of education and learning for all through excellence in applied research, product development, and service. Teachers who successfully participate in the TIF program will have the opportunity to earn monies for the next four years based on individual student growth, campus growth, as well as teacher performance. PSJA Elvis J. Ballew HS teachers meet on a weekly basis before and after school, where teachers have an opportunity to share best practices with each other. This time is helpful for new teachers, but also serves as an opportunity for experienced teachers to share best practices that make their classroom the best teaching environment available for all students. PSJA Elvis J. Ballew HS, along with other alternative high schools, conduct bi-weekly content meetings as an additional support system for teachers. The purpose of these content meetings is to discuss the delivery of

instruction, rigor and relevance, TEKS, student expectations, cohesiveness and other instructional strategies that help enhance student achievement.

Do the answers to the questions for Benchmark 3 meet the criteria for exemplar recognition, and would you like the TEA to consider your ECHS for this?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Please provide additional information about the exemplar activities related to this benchmark below.

The ECHS has demonstrated that they have a historically low turnover rate. When coupled with the many support systems at the district level, the ongoing culture of support that has been built at the campus level entices faculty and staff to stay on year after year. The Professional Learning Community (PLC) model has been used at Ballew ECHS for several years as a support system for teachers. The model provides best practices, collaboration on instructional strategies and the opportunity to link PSJA teachers with STC instructors to discuss curriculum alignment, classroom management, instructional strategies and other academic classroom-related components. Another exemplary practice our campus participates in to retain quality teachers is the Texas Incentive Fund (TIF) program. Teachers are compensated through a system of support and evaluation; campus leaders are trained to build high quality human capital and capacity.

The ECHS shall provide a course of study that enables participating students to complete high school graduation requirements and either an associates's degree or at least 60 semester credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree. Please indicate how students will progress toward this goal by completing the course crosswalk below. (Important notice about summer school: The 60 college credit hour plan must be fulfilled during the school year unless the ECHS is a year-round school or provisions are made to provide all ECHS students with access to the summer courses. Courses offered during the summer must be supplemental or available at other times of the year.)

**note: For dual credit courses, please indicate whether the course is taught by someone who is primarily IHE staff or ISD staff and whether the course is taught primarily in person or via distance learning.*

Please indicate the endorsements that will be offered to students. The endorsements include: STEM, Business, and Industry, Public Service, Arts and Humanities, and Multidisciplinary Studies.

Endorsements offered to students are: STEM, Business and Industry, Public Service, Arts and Humanities, and Multidisciplinary Studies.

Please indicate the associate's degrees that will be offered to students.

Associate degrees that students have the opportunity to earn are: Interdisciplinary Studies; Biology; Criminal Justice; Mathematics; Physics; Engineering; Computer Science; Psychology; Spanish; Chemistry; Secondary Education; and Political Science.

Please indicate the Level 1 and Level 2 certificates that will be offered to students.

The level 1 certificates that are offered to students at PSJA Ballew ECHS are: Multimedia Specialist; Computer Applications Specialist; Medical Office Specialist; Computer Internet Specialist; Structural Welding; Health Electronic Records Specialist; Recruiter Assistant; and Payroll Assistant

Please indicate how the ECHS will monitor student progress and use student data to support success.

PSJA Ballew ECHS has an electronic Career Ladder program that provides students with academic information geared towards high school attainment that is accessible to students on or off campus through the Home Access Center. The Career Ladder is available to parents both in English and Spanish. The school also issues each student a “credit check” form that outlines what high school credits they have received and which ones they still need to earn. This is especially important for students who are off track from graduating on time. These students need a clear understanding of where they stand academically. PSJA Ballew ECHS issues progress reports which provide students with their academic standing to ensure that student learning is taking place. The counselor at PSJA Ballew ECHS will provide advice on college and career planning, academic programs, student data and academic support. The counselor and/or administration meets with students and parents through conferences in order to ensure success. During these conferences, the counselor and/or administrator helps the students create a student intervention plan (tutoring, emotional, social, college knowledge, support workshops designed for student success). PSJA Ballew ECHS has a one-hour enrichment period each day where teachers will help monitor students' progress in high school and CTE dual credit courses. PSJA Ballew ECHS Financial Aid Officer and PSJA/STC College Transition Specialist will also help students search for scholarships and apply for grants. STC has an array of student and academic support services that help monitor the progress of students. Students have access to Jagnet, which provides them access to numerous services such as degree plans, course schedules, grade point average, progress meter, blackboard and other support services.

Please indicate how the ECHS will provide academic support to the students by personalizing the learning environment.

PSJA Ballew ECHS is committed to provide academic rigor and relevance in education in order to prepare all students for college and career readiness. At PSJA Ballew ECHS, class size is small in order to provide highly personalized attention and to encourage the development of lasting teacher/student relationships. Teachers attend extensive staff development and demonstrate success in working with high-need students who are at risk of not pursuing a post-secondary education. All teachers are required to go through Pre-AP and AP Summer Institutes in order to address the rigor of the curriculum and meet the needs of all students. The goal of the PSJA Ballew ECHS professional learning community is to build a college bound culture based on CTE career pathways to help students gain confidence, college and career awareness and the academic skills to overcome barriers. All incoming students will obtain a degree plan and be provided with the necessary awareness to help them achieve success as an ECHS student. Students who are in need of assistance at PSJA Ballew ECHS will be offered the necessary support services such as college readiness curriculum, TSI tutorials, individual academic intervention plans, summer enrichment support programs, summer acceleration for college course advancement, summer tutorial services, parental involvement meetings, daycare services throughout the year, transportation, night school, and counseling services both at the ECHS and STC. As a result, the campus will collaboratively build enrichment activities, fostering rigorous CTE academic preparation, encouraging early college planning, and guiding students and their parents through the college admissions process. PSJA Ballew ECHS also engages all incoming students by providing them with a comprehensive detailed orientation that educates the students on the campus culture, its services and its benefits. An emphasis is made on the school district's C3 initiative, "College Ready, College Connected and College Complete."

Please indicate how the ECHS will provide social and emotional support to the students.

To help build a strong and purposeful academic environment, it is important that a strong social and emotional support system be in place to help students with the stresses and pressure taking advanced coursework can often bring. The ECHS counselor, college transition specialist and financial aid officer are well trained in college admittance, federal aid applications, scholarships and college entrance exams as well as helping at-risk students with adjusting and coping with new responsibilities and life's pressure. Also to assist the ECHS students, computer labs, free tuition and college textbooks are available to ease financial burdens students may face. Students who are having a difficult time juggling the many responsibilities dual credit courses bring, are assigned a mentor teacher. These mentor teachers are meant to support, guide and encourage students to be positive regarding their coursework and direct them to tutoring services and teach good study habits the students can find useful. Also a "Growth Mindset" curriculum is taught by every teacher on campus. Daily lessons are delivered to all students for 10-15 minutes in regards to being positive and changing "fixed" minds to those that "grow". At-risk students are often negative thinkers and that can translate into poor outcomes. The word "yet" is taught during these lessons to instill hope for all students who may not have been successful in the past and not been able to pass assessments to the mindset that they just haven't been successful "yet".

Do the answers to the questions for Benchmark 5 meet the criteria for exemplar recognition, and would you like the TEA to consider your ECHS for this?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Please provide additional information about the exemplar activities related to this benchmark below.

Ballew ECHS staff has received and applied numerous academic supports for the at-risk students to be successful to meet high school requirements and then move on to college connectedness. The ECHS counselor, college transition specialist and financial aid officer work collaboratively at the campus level to support students to connect them to college. PSJA ISD created a unique position -- the college transition specialist -- to enhance the student's college-going experience. The ECHS counselor has undergone an intensive training on becoming a college advisor as well as a counselor. The counselor is well versed in college admission requirements, federal student aid applications, scholarships and college entrance exams. Additionally, they are skilled at helping at-risk students with adjusting and coping with new responsibilities and life's pressures. Students also participate in ongoing TSI tutorials throughout the school day and week, which have shown to have a positive impact on TSI scores.

TSI Testing and Success

Please list the dates that this group met during the past school year	September 7; September 21; October 5
Please list the dates that the TSI will be administered in the coming year	November 11; December 2; December 9
Is the ECHS a TSI assessment site or does the IHE administer the TSI?	☒ ECHS is a TSI assessment site ☐ IHE administers the TSI

Please describe a plan for the ECHS to achieve TSI success. Include information about academic preparation classes for accepted students and/or bridge program(s), academic interventions for students who do not pass TSI, and assessments fee waivers for all administrations of the TSI test.

PSJA BALLEW ECHS in conjunction with our District’s College Readiness Department tests all entering students on TSI. Through continuous support and training from STC, PSJA BALLEW ECHS has made available pre-testing tutorials and testing opportunities for all students through the schools’ TSI Testing Fridays’ initiative. This initiative will provide accessibility for students to test and be TSI ready. To simulate the TSI testing experience, all teachers complete the Pre-Assessment Activity and take the TSI exam. Through this initiative, teachers will be better equipped to prepare their students for their TSI exam. Teachers will plan their instruction addressing the needs of their students and prepare them to be successful on the test. Students who are not successful are required to attend contextualized tutorials with teachers who will be trained by our College Readiness Department. Teachers will be trained using Sure Score, a TSI test prep curriculum, in order to inspire every student to discover their true potential by providing personalized instruction and pathway to achievement. Test results will be used to advise students in the selection of college courses and degree plan completion. Currently, the students that are enrolled in one or more college courses are being served with academic interventions to ensure student success. PSJA BALLEW ECHS will work with the College Readiness department to implement a summer bridge program that will provide in depth instruction on TSI and college readiness skills. This program will take place at PSJA BALLEW ECHS for all our incoming students as well as students who may need additional assistance to ensure success in their high school and college courses. College Readiness has a TSI summer bridge program matrix designed to cover all elements of TSI and provide students with academic and college knowledge seminar workshops. Through after school and night school tutorials, teachers will provide the academic interventions for students who do not pass the TSI based on the diagnostic data received from the students test administration. In addition, PSJA BALLEW ECHS Juniors and Seniors will be provided with fee waivers, so they may register and take the ACT/SAT, which will be used to help students transition from our ECHS to a four year university. PSJA BALLEW ECHS will consistently portray the importance of achieving TSI readiness to inspire students to be successful through their teachers, counselors and administration.

Do the answers to the questions for Benchmark 5 meet the criteria for exemplar recognition, and would you like the TEA to consider your ECHS for this?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Please provide additional information about the exemplar activities related to this benchmark below.

Ballew ECHS staff receives many hours of professional development throughout the school year, including a 90-minute "collaborative learning community time" which is incorporated twice a week into the teachers' workday. During this time, teachers collaborate on individualized instruction for our at-risk students as well as increasing levels of rigor and expectations for the challenges of higher education and college work. This practice is an exemplar because it is done routinely and at high levels of implementation.

In addition the ECHS counselor also coordinates all TSI efforts for the campus. The counselor coordinates testing dates as well as the tutoring schedule for students. Seniors are enrolled in TSI courses throughout the school day and taught by highly trained teachers. Summer sessions and after school tutoring opportunities are available for all students and there are at least 3 testing opportunities per month available for all students.

ECHS Site Design

What is the design of the ECHS model for which partners are requesting designation?

- ☐ ECHS on a college campus
- ☒ Not located on a college campus
- A converted/transformed, school wide high school campus

Please describe when and how the ECHS students will make use of IHE academic and support facilities, such as libraries, labs, advising center, career center, eating facilities, cultural facilities, and sports facilities. If the ECHS is located on a college campus, just write, 'ECHS is on a college campus.'

The partnership commitment between PSJA ISD and STC will provide high caliber opportunities to all PSJA Ballew ECHS students. Both educational institutions lead the transformation of the region to a “college-going” culture in which a high school diploma and an associate's degree and/or career certificates will be completed simultaneously within the 2-3 years of enrollment. Through meetings and agenda dialogues, the PSJA ISD and STC Leadership Team will use various institutional resources to make every effort to increase awareness, accessibility and ensure that students maximize the use of STC resources and facilities. Students will be issued an STC JAGNET account, which allows personalized access to web services at STC. The web services include access to all student and academic support services, degree audits and other educational resources. Students will also have access to all the STC Centers for Learning Excellence. In these centers, students can obtain additional tutoring services and will have access to individual and group study rooms. Students will also have access to Student Life activities and programs. The Office of Student Life will make available intramural sports should the students wish to participate. In addition to intramural sports, students will be encouraged to join or start clubs or organizations. STC has committed classroom and lab space to accommodate ECHS students that will be taking classes at the college campus. Students will have access to all equipment, which is required and available in the College's existing classrooms and labs. The students will also have access to the latest instructional technologies to conduct presentations in the classrooms. In addition to a fully staffed library department, STC has a Dual Enrollment Librarian which is solely dedicated full time to helping ECHS students access all STC library collections and reference materials. ECHS students will also qualify for a TexShare Library card, which will give them access to material in over 500 Texas participating public libraries. Through a developed timeline, the Leadership Team will develop a systematic approach that will allow PSJA Ballew ECHS students from different grade levels to take advantage of STC's academic and support facilities. Such planning will include but, not be limited to: offering a hybrid class where students may meet at the STC campus, individual student advisement by STC advisors, open-access to all STC resources. Moreover, PSJA Ballew ECHS will be moving to a new and enhanced equipped facility that includes state of the art technology for full student enrichment. The new facility includes two innovative science labs and additional space for expansion. PSJA Ballew ECHS will be committed to helping students with an environment geared towards college life.

If the ECHS shares a campus number, partners must agree to collect and disaggregate ECHS student data from school-wide, non-ECHS data in order to show outcomes specific to the ECHS.

- ☐ The campus number is shared and the partners agree to collect and disaggregate data
- ☒ Not applicable

School Design: Staffing

Please describe all duties and responsibilities of the ECHS principal or director. Explain the principal or director's role in scheduling, hiring, and budgeting for the ECHS. If the ECHS principal or director has any duties or responsibilities unrelated or in addition to ECHS leadership, please explain.

The ECHS principal oversees all school wide operations of the early college high school and closely monitors the academic standing of all students. The ECHS principal is in constant communication with counselor, college advisor, master scheduler, and STC liaison in order to ensure students are taking the correct sequence of courses in their degree plan. The ECHS principal ensures the ECHS campus fosters a college-going culture where most of the students are traditionally under-represented or low-performing; and must provide a blended high school and college curriculum which exposes students to all education disciplines with a special emphasis on science, math, engineering, healthcare, and technology related to CTE pathways. In order to ensure the hiring of highly qualified staff, the principal follows the hiring process in accordance to human resources hiring guidelines, and hires teachers who possess extensive subject knowledge in technology; teachers who are highly qualified with the ability to teach and reinforce the curriculum with rigor and relevance and who are willing to learn a wide range of common instructional strategies. The ECHS principal provides professional development training activities for ECHS teachers which focus on creating an academic culture that enables struggling learners to achieve success in college courses. The ECHS principal ensures students receive the emotional and academic support from counselors and teachers who closely monitor students every three weeks. The ECHS principal works closely with STC faculty and staff designated to provide instruction and support services for all students. The ECHS principal closely monitors the budget in order to ensure all services are in place and budget must be adjusted yearly to allow for the growth of each incoming student.

Please describe the duties and responsibilities of the IHE liaison for your ECHS, including how frequently he or she meets and/or works with the ECHS principal/director.

The STC liaison provides leadership, planning, coordination, implementation and evaluation for PSJA Ballew ECHS. The liaison meets with the PSJA Ballew ECHS Principal on a biweekly basis to discuss student degree plans, selection of college class course offerings, student registration, continuous student orientation program, sharing student data, college resources, college site visits, student workshops, tutorials, advising and any other service or resource that will prepare students for academic success. Both the liaison and the Principal will remain in constant communication via email and telephone.

Is the IHE liaison working with other ECHS campuses?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Please list the other ECHS campuses the IHE liaison works with.

PSJA High ECHS, Monte Alto ECHS, Edinburg HS ECHS, Economedes ECHS, Edinburg North ECHS, Robert Vela ECHS, Southwest ECHS, Mercedes ECHS, Progreso ECHS, Edcouch ECHS, La Villa ECHS, Mission Collegiate ECHS, Mission CTE ECHS, Valley View ECHS, Thelma Salinas ECHS, CCTA ECHS, Sotomayor ECHS, Hidalgo ECHS, McAllen Achieve ECHS, PSJA TSTEM ECHS, Sharyland ECHS, PSJA North ECHS, Weslaco East ECHS, Weslaco High ECHS, Weslaco CTE ECHS, PSJA Memorial ECHS, El Comodoro ECHS, El Paso ECHS, El Paso Community College ECHS

Which statement best represents the assignment of the ECHS teachers?

- ☒ The ECHS employs highly qualified teachers who report only to the ECHS principal/director and teach only ECHS students in all core courses.
- ☐ The ECHS will employ highly qualified teachers who, within four years, will be reporting only to the ECHS principal/director and teach only ECHS students in all core courses.
- ☐ Other

If other, please describe below:

Please describe the annual professional development plan, teacher mentor programs and/or opportunities for ECHS teachers and higher-education faculty to receive extensive training and support through regularly scheduled formative peer observations and collaboration opportunities with IHE faculty.

Our ECHS staff will support the transformation of teaching methods, preparation and instructional delivery in order to meet the needs of our students and transforming them into 21st century learners. Professional development activities for ECHS teachers focus on creating an academic culture that enables struggling learners to achieve success in college courses. PSJA Ballew ECHS is a conducive facility with efficient planning, institutional partnerships, and has the integration of best instructional practices which can contribute to an effective implementation of the ECHS design. Our external and internal instructional and leadership coaches provide the training and support of all teachers including our higher education staff. These Common Instructional Framework (CIF) strategies allow our students to process information using listening, speaking, reading and writing opportunities several times within a class period. In the classroom, these strategies promote meaningful student communication and collaboration; which can turn an otherwise teacher centered lesson into an engaging and interactive student centered lesson. These protocols foster district wide coherence around the CIF as teachers of all grade levels and content areas use similar structures and strategies to promote active language based learning, especially in at-risk or struggling learners. Transforming teacher centered learning to learner centered environments is the best practice for our 21st century students. Through our Professional Learning Community meetings, teachers have the opportunity to plan and work together with other teachers while creating the best coherent intentional lesson for their students on a daily basis. New teachers are also supported through The Rio Grande Valley Center for Teaching and Leading Excellence in our district. Teachers learn CIF strategies (best practices) that support students in their learning while taking college courses. Their mission is to develop outstanding instructional leaders who possess an intense strategic focus on the core elements of teaching and learning, and to ensure high academic achievement for all students. This mentoring program provides multiple pathways to teacher and school leadership, thus dramatically increasing the number of highly effective school leaders that serve an increasing high needs student population. ECHS teachers and higher education faculty collaborate to ensure that both organizations are aligned with up to date innovative strategies. Collaboration will occur through professional development, team teaching, and intentional purposeful meetings. The staff will encourage and support the transformation of teaching methods, preparation, and instructional delivery in order to meet the diverse needs of the PSJA Ballew ECHS students. PSJA Ballew ECHS will be committed to promoting continued education at a more rigorous level beyond high school.

Which statement best reflects the enrollment policies regarding ECHS students?

- ☐ The ECHS employs highly qualified teachers who report only to the ECHS principal/director and teach only ECHS students in all core courses.
- ☐ The ECHS students will enroll in core courses that include only ECHS students and/or only college students.

If other, please describe below:

- ☐ Other

Do the answers to the questions for Benchmark 6 meet the criteria for exemplar recognition, and would you like the TEA to consider your ECHS for this?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

Please provide additional information about the exemplar activities related to this benchmark below.

What makes Ballew ECHS an exemplar in this benchmark is that our ECHS staff embraces cutting edge and research-based teaching methods, preparation and instructional delivery in order to meet the needs of our students to transform them into 21st century learners. Professional development activities for ECHS teachers focus on creating an academic culture that enables struggling learners to achieve success in college courses.

Ballew ECHS and South Texas College share a commitment to creating a college-going culture to all students in the ECHS. In addition, the campus principal meets with the ECHS counselor twice a week and with the college transition specialist and the financial aid officer once a week. Communication with the campus IHE liaison is maintained via phone and email. Discussions are always centered around students. Topics such as professional development for staff, student data, budget needs, how to engage parents and the continuation of student academic and emotional support services are constant agenda items.

Supporting Documents

Program Requirements

Verify the ECHS campus has the most current versions of each required attachments on file at the campus by checking the boxes below.

The following documents must be submitted for fulfilling the submission requirements of this application:

- Memorandum of Understanding with Institution of Higher Learning (MUST COVER 2015-2016 School Year):** The ECHS must have a current, signed MOU that defines the partnership between the school districts and the IHE by the start of the 2016 school year. If the ECHS does not have a signed MOU that covers the 2016-2017 school year, a signed version covering the 2015-2016 school year or an unsigned version covering the 2016-2017 school year can be included in this application.
- ECHS recruitment and enrollment documents:** Written policies, application and evaluation documents, etc. covering the 2015-2016 school year. If policies, applications, evaluation, etc. covering the 2015-2016 school year are not finalized, the 2014-2015 documents may be submitted. Documents from 2014-2015 should be submitted with a letter of explanation indicating that the documents are from the previous year. The letter should also describe any changes the ECHS intends to make to the documents.
- ISD Letter of Support (District 1):** The ECHS must have a current, signed letter of support from each partnering ISD.
- ISD Letter of Support (District 2):** The ECHS must have a current, signed letter of support from each partnering ISD.
- ISD Letter of Support (District 3):** The ECHS must have a current, signed letter of support from each partnering ISD.
- IHE Letter of Support (IHE 1):** The ECHS must have a current, signed letter of support from each partnering IHE.
- IHE Letter of Support (IHE 2):** The ECHS must have a current, signed letter of support from each partnering IHE.
- IHE Letter of Support (IHE 3):** The ECHS must have a current, signed letter of support from each partnering IHE.

Note: To upload a new version of a document, simply drag it into the box where the current document is showing.

MOU



Ballew ECHS MOU.docx

ECHS Recruitment and Enrollment Form



Ballew.application.admission.docx

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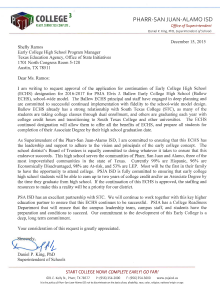
☐ Final ☒ Draft

Expected date for final draft:

01/29/2016

(mm/dd/yyyy)

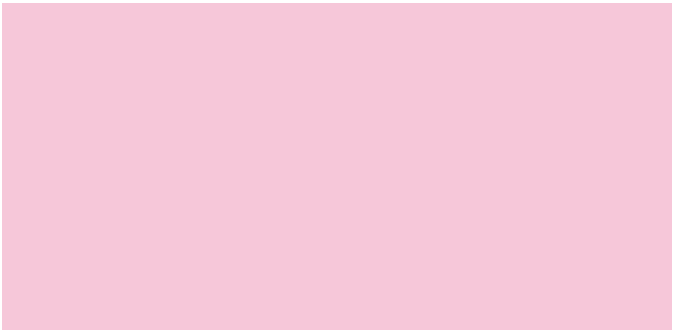
Letter of Support from District #1



Status

☒ Final ☐ Draft

Letter of Support from District #2



Status

☐ Final ☐ Draft

Texas Education Agency

Application for Early College High School Designation

PSJA Elvis J. Ballew High School - 218161358

Generate PDF of Application

Expected date for final draft:
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Letter of Support from District #3

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☐ Final ☐ Draft

Expected date for final draft:
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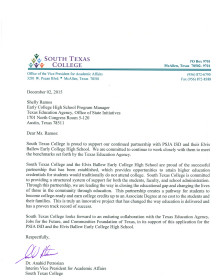
Letter of Support from IHE Partner #2

Status
☐ Final ☐ Draft

Expected date for final draft:
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Expected date for final draft:
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Letter of Support from IHE Partner #1



Status
☒ Final ☐ Draft

Expected date for final draft:
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Letter of Support from IHE Partner #3

Status
☐ Final ☐ Draft

Expected date for final draft:
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Other Supporting Documents



CRITERIA FOR ADMITTANCE TO ATTEND PSJA ELVIS J. BALLEW HIGH SCHOOL.

docx