TEA
Texas Education Agency

Abbreviated Application for ECHS Designation

ECHS Academy: Sonia M. Sotomayor Early College High School

(Previously Designated)

2017-2018

Contents

Part 1: Provisions and Assurances

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.

1.1 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 students, and Hispanic students). ☑
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. ☑

1.2 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. ☑

1.3 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 publicly available. ☑

1.4 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 associate's 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 associate's 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. ☑

1.5 Academic Rigor and Readiness:

The Early College High School shall administer a Texas Success Initiative (TSI) college placement exam (as defined by TAC §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 associate's 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. ☑
   ◦ 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. ☑
   ◦ The ECHS shall report to TEA the dates the TSI is administered. ☑
   ◦ 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. ☑

1.6 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; ☑
    ○ 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. ☑

Part 2: Contact Information

2.1 ECHS Academy

ECHS Academy Name:
Sonia M. Sotomayor Early College High School

County District Campus Number:
108909005

County District Campus Number 2:

County District Campus Number 3:

This CDC number:
Belongs to only the ECHS

What is the 2016-2017 ECHS designation status of your campus?:
Provisional: Operating under the 3 year provisionally designated status.

Mailing Address - Line 1:
1200 East Polk Street

Mailing Address - Line 2:

City:
Pharr

State:
Tx

Zip Code:
78577

2.2 School District

School District Name
Pharr SanJuan Alamo ISD

Mailing Address - Line 1:
601 East Kelly Avenue

Mailing Address - Line 2:

Mailing City:
Pharr

State:
Tx

Mailing Zip Code:
78577

2.2.a School District 2

School District Name:

Mailing Address - Line 1:

Mailing Address - Line 2:

Mailing City:

State:
Tx

Mailing Zip Code:

2.2.b School District 3

School District Name:

Mailing Address - Line 1:

Mailing Address - Line 2:

Mailing City:

State:
Tx

Mailing Zip Code:

2.3 Primary Institution of Higher Education (IHE) Partner

Partner Name:

South Texas College

How many ECHS does this IHE partner with?

30

Mailing Address - Line 1:

3201 Pecan Blvd.

Mailing Address - Line 2:

Mailing City:

McAllen

State:

Tx

Mailing Zip Code:

78501

2.3.a Secondary Institution of Higher Education (IHE) Partner

Partner Name:

How many ECHS does this IHE partner with?

Mailing Address - Line 1:

Mailing Address - Line 2:

Mailing City:

State:

Tx

Mailing Zip Code:

2.3.b Additional Institution of Higher Education (IHE) Partner

Partner Name:

How many ECHS does this IHE partner with?

Mailing Address - Line 1:

Mailing Address - Line 2:

Mailing City:

State:

Tx

Mailing Zip Code:

2.4 Education Service Center Region

Education Service Center Region: 01

2.5 Person Completing this Application

Title:

Principal

First Name:

Rosa

Last Name:

Rakay

Phone:

956-354-2510

Email:

rosa.rakay@psjaisd.us

Part 2.a: School District Contact Information

2.6 ECHS Principal/Director

Title:

Principal

First Name: **Last Name:**

Rosa   Rakay

Phone: **Email:**

956-354-2510   rosa.rakay@psjaisd.us

2.7 Superintendent (District 1)

Title:

Superintendent

First Name: **Last Name:**

Daniel   King

Phone: **Email:**

956-354-2000   drking@psjaisd.us

2.7.a Superintendent (District 2)

Title:

First Name: **Last Name:**

Phone: **Email:**

2.7.b Superintendent (District 3)

Title:

First Name: **Last Name:**

Phone: **Email:**

Part 2.b: Institution of Higher Education Contact Information

2.8 Institution of Higher Education Liaison

Title:
Director for Early College High
Schools

First Name: **Last Name:**
Sofia   Pena

Phone Number: **Email:**
956-872-2303   sofia21@southtexascollege.edu

2.8.a Institution of Higher Education Liaison (complete when there are two IHE partners)

Title:

First Name: **Last Name:**

Phone Number: **Email:**

2.8.b Institution of Higher Education Liaison (complete when there are three IHE partners)

Title:

First Name: **Last Name:**

Phone Number: **Email:**

2.9 Authorized Institution of Higher Education Official

Title:
President

First Name: **Last Name:**
Shirley   Reed

Phone Number: **Email:**
956-872-8366   yolandao@southtexascollege.edu

2.9.a Authorized Institution of Higher Education Official (complete when there are two IHE partners)

Title:

First Name: **Last Name:**

Phone Number: **Email:**

2.9.b Authorized Institution of Higher Education Official (complete when there are three IHE partners)

Title:

First Name: **Last Name:**

Phone Number: **Email:**

Part 3: Benchmarks

Benchmark 1 - Target Population

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, put 0 (zero).								
Grades of students to be served	**6th**	**7th**	**8th**	**9th**	**10th**	**11th**	**12th**	**Total Enrollment**
2016-2017 enrollment	0	0	1	10	37	30	28	106
2017-2018 projected enrollment	0	0	5	10	15	42	35	107

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 place a zero in each row in the ECHS column. This information will be submitted by provisional designation finalists to TEA in the spring.				
Demographics	**Percent of High School Students in District (from PEIMS)**	**Percent of High School Students in District (if multi-district) (from PEIMS)**	**Percent of High School Students in District (if multi-district) (from PEIMS)**	**Percent of All Students Enrolled in ECHS**
Economically Disadvantaged	88.24	NA	NA	99.1
At-Risk	60.38	NA	NA	100
LEP	26.74	NA	NA	42.5
White	.01	NA	NA	.99
Hispanic or Latino	99.19	NA	NA	99.01
Black or African-American	.0009	NA	NA	0
First Generation College-Goers	N/A	N/A	N/A	NA
Other	.0002	NA	NA	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:	

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 Independent School District (PSJA ISD) has provided a personalized school of choice, Sonia M. Sotomayor Early College High School (SMSECHS) for young mothers or pregnant teens to finish high school and attain postsecondary education. SMSECHS is an alternative campus that serves girls ages 13-21 who are 100% at-risk as defined in PEIMS and ECHS Benchmark #1. It is the intent of SMECHS that these girls will graduate from high school, attend college while in high school and receive up to 60 hours or an Associates Degree. Counselors at the comprehensive campuses in the district are provided with information on brochures or conference calls for students interested in transferring to the campus. Individual tours of the campus and student/parent conferences are scheduled as needed by principal and staff to help with the decision by students and parents. SMSECHS supports all incoming students by providing sufficient ECHS program literacy, educating the students and parents about the ECHS model, and encouraging eligible students to apply to SMSECHS.   PSJA ISD Public Relations Office assists SMSECHS with informational materials such as program literacy flyers, both in English and Spanish, website information, social media, the school district's local channel (KTRI 17) and informational booths at registration sites. SMSECHS conducts home visits during the months of August and September to target the subpopulation that is eligible to enroll at the campus. The staff meets individually with students and parents and does a turn-key application to enroll them. SMSECHS is a school wide comprehensive ECHS; therefore, every teenage mother or expectant mother who enrolls in this school of choice automatically qualifies as an ECHS student.

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

SMSECHS follows the ECHS school-wide model. Enrollment consist of special outreach to identify all teenage and expectant mothers in our district and orient them on the opportunity to enroll in this unique school of choice ECHS. All students of the target population who apply will be accepted. Students who opt to transfer from SMSECHS and return to their respective comprehensive home-based campus will remain ECHS students. The ECHS enrollment processes and requirements shall not exclude or discourage the enrollment of any of the subpopulations of at-risk students throughout the school year. SMSECHS obtains information for assessing the success of effective enrollment strategies by providing student, parent, teacher, STC adjunct instructor and community surveys.

For this benchmark, indicate the level at which your ECHS campus will operate in the 2017-2018 school year. Use the ECHS Blueprint as a guide.

STATUS: Exemplar

Please provide a brief description of how your ECHS program meets the criteria for Exemplar recognition for this benchmark. (300 word maximum)

All of our students are automatically accepted into our campus and afforded the early college experience regardless of demographic backgrounds. Upon enrollment into Sonia M. Sotomayor ECHS, the college transition specialist and financial aid officer provide an immediate in-take advising session which consist of completing a college admissions application, getting registered to take the TSI test and college academic advisement immediately after scores are received. Additionally, parents are also provided with the ECHS model concept and receive information on degree plans, career pathways and other college student and academic support service. Our Public Relations Department does a stellar job in the marketing and promoting of our ECHS. Information that is printed by the department is both in English and Spanish and is made available through various school district social media outlets. If a student decides to return to home campus after a semester or end of school year, student will be automatically transferred to an ECHS in the district. All support services at this campus is personalized to fit the needs of our students especially in the recruitment and enrollment efforts.

Benchmark 4: Curriculum and Support

Benchmark 4: Course Crosswalk

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Please indicate the endorsements that will be offered to students.

The endorsements offered to the students of Sonia M. Sotomayor Early College High School include: STEM, Business and Industry, Public Service, Arts and Humanities and Multidisciplinary Studies.

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

-Interdisciplinary Studies
  -Biology
  -Criminal Justice
  -Mathematics
  -Physics
  -Engineering
  -Computer Science
  -Psychology
  -Spanish
  -Chemistry
  -Secondary Education
  -Political Science

Please indicate the Level I and Level II certificates that will be offered to students.

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-Multimedia Specialist
   -Computer Application Specialist
   -Medical Office Specialist
   -Computer Internet Specialist
   -Health Electronic Records Specialist
   -Recruiter Assistant
   -Payroll Assistant
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Please indicate how the ECHS will monitor student progress and use student data to support success.

SMSECHS has an electronic Career Ladder program that provides students with academic information geared towards high school attainment which is accessible to students through the Home Access Center. The Career Ladder is available to parents both in English and Spanish. SMSECHS issues progress reports and report cards which provide students with their academic standing. Additionally, SMSECHS conducts weekly teacher observations and district learning walks. These observations and walks serve to access the teacher's performance in relation to the research-based teaching strategies. SMSECHS provides seminars every other week by the social worker to help with student needs in the areas of tutoring, social and emotional support, college knowledge and student support workshops designed for student success. A student file is kept for every student to include TSI scores, colleges/universities of interest, individual instructional plans, South Texas College (STC) A #s, degree plans, semester schedules. credit checks, etc. PSJA ISD has a data sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with STC. The MOU allows SMSECHS data access to the student's declared major, current grade point average, cumulative grade point average, current and previous college hours taken, proximity to completion of degree, TSI scores and other pertinent information critical in using to providing comprehensive advising. Through this MOU, SMSECHS may request additional reports throughout the school year that will provide us with the data to ensure that students are retained from one semester to the next. In addition to the data sharing MOU, SMSECHS has a Financial Aid Advisor and College Transition Specialist assigned to the campus. This personnel assist SMSECHS students with all college admission applications, financial aid applications, scholarship applications, assist with college registration and orientate the students with college student and academic support services. Students also have access to Jagnet, which is STC's student portal. Jagnet provides students with 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.

At SMSECHS, class size is small in order to provide highly personalized attention and to encourage the development of lasting teacher/student relationships. Teachers are cross trained in helping students with TSI, Financial Aid, Apply Texas, credit checks and STC college advising. Teachers also attend extensive staff development and demonstrate success in working with high-needs at-risk students who are challenged in not pursuing a post-secondary education. All teachers are required to go through Pre-AP and AP Summer Workshops in order to address the rigor of the curriculum and meet the needs of all the students. The goal of the SMSECHS professional learning community is to build a college-bound culture based on early college awareness to help students gain confidence, college and career awareness and the academic skills to overcome barriers. All incoming freshman obtain a degree plan and are provided with the necessary awareness to help them achieve success as an ECHS students. Students who are in need of assistance at SMSECHS are offered the necessary support services such as college readiness curriculum, TSI tutorials, individual academic intervention plans, summer enrichment support programs, college mini-mesters throughout the year, 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 collaboratively builds student aspirations by providing enrichment activities, fostering rigorous academic preparation, encouraging early college planning, and guiding students and their parents through the college admissions process. SMSECHS also engages all incoming students by providing them with a comprehensive detailed orientation that educates the students on the campus culture, its services and benefits. A strong emphasis is made on the school district's initiative, which is "College Ready, College Connected and College Complete." SMSECHS provides site visits to STC for both students and parents. During these site visits, students and parents have the opportunity to speak with college instructors and current students about the resources provided by SMSECHS and STC.

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

Sonia M. Sotomayor ECHS provides an array of social and emotional support services for the students. These services include a full-time social worker and an LVN that are stationed at the campus. SMSECHS makes available to the student, day care centers and provides transportation at no cost. The district provides support focus groups related to parenting and college readiness. Through the district's parental involvement program, motivational speakers speak with students about the importance of an education and a better quality life. Community resources are invited to discuss with our students pediatric care, family literacy, parenting classes, child development and other social related services. In partnerships with community resources, students are also provided with parenting seminars, planned-parenthood information, child care services and breastfeeding. The Rio Grande Valley Council, AVANCE, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provide free parenting and educational programs designed for the well-being of the parent and children. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides students with affordable housing opportunities. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission and Food Bank of the RGV, educate and assist students with the food stamp and health care program applications. Students also have the opportunity to engage at STC by receiving their counseling and advising services. In addition, students have full access to other resources which include student life clubs and organizations and Center for Learning Excellence tutorial and other resources. The students have participated in the intramural tournaments held at South Texas College along with other early college high schools from the valley.

For this benchmark, indicate the level at which your ECHS campus will operate in the 2017-2018 school year. Use the ECHS Blueprint as a guide.

STATUS: Exemplar

Please provide a brief description of how your ECHS program meets the criteria for Exemplar recognition for this benchmark. (300 word maximum)

Students are motivated and rewarded by the Incentive Reward Store, which hold diapers, food, clothing and baby furniture to help with their needs while attending school and acquiring college hours. Extracurricular activities are also geared to help our students with socialization such as STEM club, Robotics Club, Student Council, National Honor Society, Reading Club and Business Professionals of America (BPA). The students have also exemplified a positive connection with the surrounding communities in that they have volunteered countless hours to RGV Food Bank, Toy Distribution to our district colonias with the assistance of a 00 Hasbro Grant, literacy opportunities with the Pat Mora Award (in which a grant was received for delivery of books to help them with literacy skills to help their own children), a Robotics grant of 00 and a Reading club in which our students go to a neighboring elementary to read to the students and utilize their reading skills and strategies for comprehension.

Part 4: Supporting Documents

Verify the Academy has the most current versions of each required attachments on file at the campus by checking the boxes below. If a required attachment doesn't cover the 2017-2018 school year, a version covering the 2016-2017 school year must be included in this application.

Memorandum of Understanding with Institution of Higher Learning (MUST COVER 2017-2018 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 2017 school year.

Attached	Status	Expected Date for Final (if draft)
View Uploaded Document		N/A

ECHS recruitment and enrolment documents: Written policies, application and evaluation documents, etc.

Attached	Status	Expected Date for Final (if draft)
View Uploaded Document	Final	N/A

Other Supporting Document: The ECHS may upload one additional supporting document.

Attached	Status	Expected Date for Final (if draft)
View Uploaded Document	Submitted	N/A