



Abbreviated Application for ECHS Designation

**ECHS Academy: Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Thomas Jefferson
TSTEM Early College High School**

(Previously Designated)

2017-2018

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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:

Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Thomas
Jefferson TSTEM Early College High
School

County District Campus Number:

108909009

**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?:**

Full: Operating beyond the 3 year
provisional designation status

Mailing Address - Line 1:

714 East Business Highway 83

Mailing Address - Line 2:

City:

Pharr

State:

Tx

Zip Code:

78577

2.2 School District

School District Name

Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD

Mailing Address - Line 1:

601 East Kelly

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 City:

Mailing Address - Line 2:

State:

Tx

Mailing Zip Code:

2.2.b School District 3

School District Name:

Mailing Address - Line 1:

Mailing City:

Mailing Address - Line 2:

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: Virna	Last Name: Bazan
Phone: 9567848525	Email: virna.maldonado@psjaisd.us

Part 2.a: School District Contact Information

2.6 ECHS Principal/Director

Title:

Principal

First Name:

Virna

Phone:

9567848525

Last Name:

Bazan

Email:

virna.maldonado@psjaisd.us

2.7 Superintendent (District 1)

Title:

Superintendent

First Name:

Dr. Daniel P.

Phone:

9563542000

Last Name:

King

Email:

drking@psjaisd.us

2.7.a Superintendent (District 2)

Title:

First Name:

Phone:

Last Name:

Email:

2.7.b Superintendent (District 3)

Title:

First Name:

Phone:

Last Name:

Email:

Part 2.b: Institution of Higher Education Contact Information

2.8 Institution of Higher Education Liaison

Title:

Director of Early College High School

First Name:

Sofia

Last Name:

Pena

Phone Number:

9568722303

Email:

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 of South Texas College

First Name:

Dr. Shirley

Last Name:

Reed

Phone Number:

9568728366

Email:

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	0	211	192	145	125	673
2017-2018 projected enrollment	0	0	0	210	211	192	145	758

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	0	0	77
At-Risk	60.38	0	0	28
LEP	26.74	0	0	11
White	.01	0	0	0.7
Hispanic or Latino	99.19	0	0	98
Black or African-American	.0009	0	0	0.1
First Generation College-Goers	N/A	N/A	N/A	56
Other	.0002	0	0	.002

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hispanic or Latino	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Black or African-American	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Economically Disadvantaged	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other:	

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

PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School (ECHS) remains committed to improving student achievement and attainment for at-risk and underrepresented youth. Currently, PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School develops informational brochures, pamphlets, videos, posters, and marketing documents on "College for All." The marketing and communication documents are available both in English and Spanish. This is to assure that all families, community members, school board members, higher education personnel and other key stakeholders have the information they need to make sound decisions and support and promote this innovative educational concept.

Presently, a recruitment plan is in place with marketing processes that include presentations to all eighth grade students in all eight middle schools in the district; STEM Recruitment Camp; Recruitment Expo featuring all clubs and organizations, evening parent/student orientation meetings and campus tours given in both English and Spanish, invitation flyers in both English and Spanish, presentations prepared by T-STEM students describing campus experiences; telephone messenger and Living Tree online app inviting parents of all eighth grade students to come learn about T-STEM and receive campus tours; and a student-made video showcasing student life at T-STEM ECHS. A Summer Bridge program for incoming ninth grade students is coordinated between T-STEM ECHS and STC to help transition students into a college ready T-STEM ECHS environment.

In collaboration with PSJA ISD Parental Engagement Program, PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School incorporates the parent component by encouraging parent attendance at a "Welcome to PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS" meeting in May, and scheduled parent meetings throughout the year. Early College High School students participate in the PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School orientation, designed to provide them with information related to academic summer bridge programs, Texas Success Initiative (TSI), early advising on associate degree plans, the sequence of courses, ECHS timeline, grade point average information, and academic student support services that will be available to them. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS will continue to use these as enrollment strategies to ensure that the targeted student population meets or exceeds the district's proportional demographic representation, defined by the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), in the areas of at-risk, economically disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, and students that are historically underrepresented in college courses. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS is a stand-alone model that leverages on best practices for recruitment and enrollment processes by continuously educating students, families, and the community.

In the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established between PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS and South Texas College (STC), the majority of the student population of the ECHS will be composed of underserved and underrepresented high school students in grades 9-12, including students who are at-risk, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, first generation college students, students who may not have received the academic preparation necessary to meet college credit entrance standards, and students for whom the cost of college is unattainable. Since almost 90% of the students in the district are economically disadvantaged and almost 75% meet the at-risk criteria, the T-STEM ECHS recruits students from all of the eight middle schools in the district knowing that most or all of the students who apply will meet some or all the MOU's stipulated criteria. Although specific information about the students is requested on the application, the selection criteria is not based on state assessment scores, discipline history, grade point averages, teacher recommendations or other requirements that would limit the selection of the students. The admission policy of our T-STEM ECHS includes a lottery-based selection process that encourages applications from all students throughout the district. Although many processes are in place for outreach and recruitment, retention activities are continuously arranged to keep students enrolled at PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS. Several clubs and organizations have been developed to motivate students to engage in purposeful school-sponsored extra-curricular activities including Robotics, Cyber Patriots, Titan Drones, NASA Student Space Program, Health Occupations Students of America, National Technical Honor Society, NHS, Envirothon Club, Plant Science Club, UIL Academics, UIL Jazz Band, Choir, Orchestra, Folklorico, Anime Club, Photography, Forensic Science Club, Senior Capstone Projects and service learning community projects in addition to other leadership opportunities. Student Ambassadors interact with district, community, and state and national visitors during campus-wide visits and tours. Parent meetings are also coordinated by our parent educator to invite parents to learn about our school and observe student presentations. A Senior Capstone Project Fair is also coordinated to invite all stakeholders including parents, community members and STC liaisons to observe the year-long STEM related Senior Capstone Projects.

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

Pharr San-Juan Alamo Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School is a stand-alone school-wide Early College High School. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS has developed a campus based Leadership Team consisting of administrators, counselors, staff club/organization sponsors, fine arts directors, student club representatives, and student ambassadors to ensure the blueprint is followed and our students needs are met. It is after every recruitment effort, that the team meets to discuss strengths and weaknesses to create next steps. Additionally, PSJA ISD supports PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS recruitment and enrollment processes through an established ECHS Leadership Committee. It is comprised of the district College Readiness Department, ECHS Principals/Directors, and district/IHE administration that collaborate on a monthly basis, evaluating best practices utilized for the recruitment and enrollment processes based on the ECHS TEA Blueprint. Both quantitative and qualitative data are applied to assess the continuous improvement. Written policies are developed or revised and submitted for approval by both the Superintendent and the District's School Board. The ECHS Leadership Committee reviews the recommendations of members of the ECHS faculty, staff, and community members on a regular basis in order to promote ongoing reviewing and refinement.

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)

PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School has established best practices in relation to the recruitment and enrollment processes of ECHS students and is focused on continuous improvement towards the exemplar recognition for student success. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School provides each student an equal opportunity, designating all students from the middle school feeder patterns, as well as any other student who wishes to attend regardless of background or academic performance. Enrollment decisions are not based on grades, state assessments, discipline, or teacher recommendation. All students are given an equal opportunity for acceptance regardless of background or academic performance. Our campus has open enrollment to allow student in the district, surrounding districts and charter schools.

PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School will continue to leverage support from the district's Public Relations, Parental Engagement, College Readiness and Student Data Departments to maintain forward momentum of the PSJA ISD Vision of "College for All." PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS is required to actively recruit since we do not have students automatically zoned to our school. We have to be very intentional and diligent in our recruitment and enrollment efforts to compete with the 4 other district comprehensive early college high schools. A timeline of student outreach and recruitment is documented and made available to the community early first semester. We are able to stress to the students that one of our big advantage is that we are a small campus, true to the early college model, and a STEM campus as well. Being a STEM campus also assists with recruitment since we are the only STEM campus in our district and we offer the opportunity for students to receive their Associate's Degree in a STEM area. Every year we refine and further improve the recruitment process consequently adding two new recruitment activities, The STEM Recruitment Camp and STEM Recruitment Expo. Counselors ensure that the information that is given to 8th grade students, is also given to their 8th grade counselors, teachers and parents. Recruitment timelines are strategically scheduled so as to not interfere with 8th grade assessments or activities. Additionally, we host ECHS Learning Walks, to ensure principals, assistant principals, and instructional coaches are informed about our unique T-STEM ECHS stand-alone campus.

Benchmark 4: Curriculum and Support

Benchmark 4: Course Crosswalk

[View Uploaded Document](#)

Please indicate the endorsements that will be offered to students.

Students at PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School have access to all five endorsements as outlined by TEA: STEM, Business & Industry, Public Service, Arts and Humanities, Multidisciplinary Studies. All of the endorsements are introduced and explained in their entirety by the PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School Counselors.

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

PSJA Thomas Jefferson will offer associate's degrees in Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Engineering, Mathematics, Criminal Justice and Interdisciplinary Studies.

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

In partnership with STC, TSTC, and CCTA, our students have an opportunity to attend courses at a special purpose campus in the district that offer Level 1 certificates in welding, multimedia specialist, computer application specialist, medical office specialist, computer internet specialist, health electronic record specialist, recruiter assistant, and payroll assistant.

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

The PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School administrators and counselors collaboratively work with students, parents, teachers, and South Texas College faculty to closely monitor student's academic progress. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School utilizes data such as assessment reports, sub group performance, attendance, college admissions exams and the PSJA ISD District Data Dashboards to monitor student progress at PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School uses this relevant data to design students' individual instructional plans to ensure that high skill and rigorous college preparation is available for continuous participation to improve academic performance. The instructional plan is reviewed and revised and kept as a working document to continue addressing and personalizing the needs of individual students. Differentiated instruction and collaboration amongst the ECHS learning community is used as a method of intervention, where instruction is research based and the strategies are used to meet the needs of all learners to increase classroom rigor. Furthermore, ECHS teachers meet weekly during Collaborative Learning Communities (CLC) to discuss ECHS student progress and address particular support structures that are meeting the needs of all students in the ECHS. CLC teams create intervention plans that include lesson enrichment, one to one instruction, language support (for LEP students), and evaluate formative and summative assessment data. This deep understanding of the assessment data also informs teachers of students' academic weaknesses and strengths, where in turn our teachers plan accordingly with interventions, remedial activities and developing opportunities for students to discuss, examine, challenge, and look at their learning from different perspectives. This approach to job embedded professional development gives all staff members a greater stake in school improvement, promotes collaboration to share ideas, and enhances teacher effectiveness. In monitoring student progress, we also see the value of engaging our parents in order for them to recognize the important role they play in assisting our ECHS with instruction and graduation plans for their child. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School holds regularly scheduled parent meetings where data-assessment scores, attendance, classroom grades, TSI and college information is shared. Ultimately, this parent engagement ensures decision-making is focused on the goals and resources essential for continuous development of each student at PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School. Our college advising counselors also play an important role in supporting and monitoring student data to make quick decisions and act on any interventions their designated students might need. Counselors periodically verify, through the IHE online portal and HS/college transcripts, the students' progress to ensure all requirements are being met. Additionally, PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM ECHS has a College Transition Specialist who serves as a unique method of assisting ECHS teachers, ECHS Directors, and ECHS counselors to collect student data for monitoring purposes and academic interventions. The College Transition Specialist is utilized as a communication vehicle that assists our students in removing any barrier that they may encounter. All support personnel maintains flexible office hours that allow them to remain visible at all times in order to best meet student needs and unique schedules. Data Disaggregation of all student subgroups drive lesson planning, student learning objectives, instructional strategies and student intervention plans. Content and Language objectives, Common Instructional Framework strategies, Writing/Reading strategies are integrated in all content areas. Student interventions include tutorials, parent conferences, STAAR and TSI academies, Student Success advisory period, Practical Writing Skills course, and HB5 ELA/Math Prep course. Professional Development Plan is created based on student assessment data, teacher instructional/classroom evaluations (McRel), and technological instructional resources. Daily classroom walkthroughs are conducted by administrators and shared with teachers through a district online portal. Teachers have access to the district data management system which provides live data on assessments and curriculum. Every teacher is required to keep a data binder on campus goals/results, student goals/results, and teacher evaluations and individual professional development plans. Student performance data from district content-based assessments, benchmark exams, six weeks exams and state assessment data is reviewed and disaggregated by every department. Action plans with goals are monitored and interventions are revised after each assessment. Dean of Instruction trains teachers to generate multiple data reports through DMAC, the district's data management system.. Administrators present data findings at the district level to further develop support systems.

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

The PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School continues to focus on creating and maintaining an environment that provides a rigorous course of study that enables students to receive a high school diploma and an associate degree or at least 60 college credit hours towards a bachelorette degree. To ensure a smooth transition to high school, all 8th grade students are provided with a College Success/TSI Course that assists them with college readiness skills such as: time management, test taking, team building, and leadership. These proven practices reinforce both the necessary academic and social/emotional supports needed in the transition to college.

Moreover, PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School incoming 9th grade students are part of the yearly ECHS Summer Bridge Program. The program is designed to meet the needs of each cohort and more importantly emphasize the importance of academics. This program connects students to a network of supportive peers, new social environments, and the adjustment process for students in the ninth grade and the ECHS. Connecting students to an environment where academic support is readily available not only personalizes the learning environment, but also increases college retention.

To ensure all students are being provided academic support throughout their courses, we have developed our master schedule to allow for teachers of the same content to have a common planning period, so that they can collaborate. It has always been a priority that administrators work closely with their assigned content team to best ensure quality and engaging lessons are being presented to optimize the learning environment. The common planning period allows teachers to share ideas and hold each other accountable for addressing individual students' needs by having open discussions where they can reflect and learn from one another. It is during this common planning period that teachers review and select the most appropriate strategy to promote success for all students within the content. At PSJA ISD, we use the Common Instructional Framework (CIF) strategies to encourage all types of learners.

Tutoring is also available for high school courses, college courses, and TSI before school, after school, and Saturday mornings for students focused on improving their academic success. ECHS staff communicates the tutoring availability days and times using our messaging systems, daily announcements, website posting, and posters throughout the campus. For students that are Limited English Proficient (LEP) and/or Special Education students, individual academic accommodations are implemented and monitored by the teacher of record and an assigned Special Education monitoring teacher.

PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School, in partnership with South Texas College, has created an on-site Center for Learning Excellence (CLE) that provides comprehensive academic support services for students in dual credit courses. In addition to CLE trained tutors, who work for South Texas College, our campus academic scholars are also trained to become peer tutors in the CLE lab. Likewise, PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School students are able to take advantage of any additional support services offered through our IHE partner.

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

PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School and South Texas College provide students with social, emotional and academic intervention support services and resources to maintain students' motivation to achieve. The PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High school counseling program is designed to support a deeper responsibility of post-secondary and personal counseling and advising. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School counselors attend various workshops and trainings throughout the year covering numerous topics from college academic advising to social-emotional development topics intended to improve school climate. Counselors utilize a school-wide approach, with a district developed guidance curriculum, to systematically assist students develop the skills they need to enhance their personal, social and emotional, educational, and college and career development. The guidance curriculum is implemented through an advisory period so that all students are connected to a teacher-mentor that provides guidance, assistance, and support while collaborating with campus administration and counselors in order to meet students' needs. PSJA ISD and South Texas College have a large network of organizations that support and assist our students and their families such as PSJA Health Center – Doctors Hospital at Renaissance, Tropical Texas Behavioral Health Services, local Boys & Girls Club, local Police Department, Child Welfare, Food Bank, Salvation Army, etc. PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School works closely with PSJA ISD's Parental Engagement Center to significantly increase the number of parents engaged in their child's education. In addition, an on-site Parental Engagement Center, led by our Parent Educator, is available for parents to connect and share ideas to help parents continue to be knowledgeable and supportive of their child's education and well-being. Several outreach strategies such as social media, brochures, call-messenger, local media outlets, and our district television channel are utilized to keep parents involved and aware of the many opportunities available to them and their children. In collaboration with South Texas College, PSJA ISD's Parental Engagement Center, and external social services we are able to fully implement a social and emotional support system to meet all students' needs.

Thomas Jefferson provides social and emotional support through a variety of methods. To build relationships and learn necessary social skills, we offer students over 30 high school clubs. All students are encouraged to join at least one club. We hold an annual club fair to expose new students to all organizations and help in our effort to keep them connected and involved. Words of wisdom are announced every morning and discussed throughout the day to reinforce the values we hold dear: respect and responsibility. Good attendance, grades and character is recognized and celebrated every six weeks.

Advisory class is another method used for providing academic, social & emotional support. The 35 minute advisory class, Student Success, is offered to all student within the school day every day. Important dates for testing and connections to social services are presented to students during advisory. They discuss student chosen topics as well as time-related topics of interest. Teacher advisors offer students college readiness guidance on a daily basis. They review student transcripts and state assessment data to keep students on track. Progress reports and report cards are issued through this class to help students take time to reflect and set goals. In this class, students maintain a record of their community service hours, awards, and all the information they need to add to their portfolio. Students are made aware of community service opportunities through school announcements, club fairs, advisory and social media. Students offer their time to charitable runs, local hospitals, students with special needs baseball leagues, the RGV food bank and many others.

The financial aid advisor and counselors provide College Success Skills Workshops once a month for each grade level, 9-12. The workshops review degree plans, TSI updates, emotion focused coping techniques, tutoring schedules, financial aid counseling and application assistance. Teachers are trained to reinforce college readiness information discussed at the workshops during Collaborative Learning Community meetings. Enrichment opportunities are offered daily. Guest speakers and capstone mentors expose students to career options and internships on a regular basis. Counselors are available all day for student questions and concerns. Parent outreach and involvement opportunities provide support as well. A workshop similar to that of students is offered to parents once a month to help parents be knowledgeable and supportive of their children. A calendar of topics and events is given to parents at the start of the year. Parents remain connected through social media, Living Tree, where we send reminders and share the school happenings daily. A campus center led by the parent educator is available for parents to connect and share ideas.

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)

PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School demonstrates exemplar recognition in Benchmark 4 by providing the best college experience, while in high school, for every student. Every student at PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School has the opportunity and resources to earn an associate degree or at least 60 college credit hours towards a bachelorette degree. To remove all barriers, we have professional staff to assist students and families with applications, financial aid, and college and career counseling. With a wealth of opportunities available to our early college students, we have the advantage of having College Transition Specialists that assist in transitioning our students to continue their post-secondary education. This is done alongside the efforts of our ECHS Director, a team of counseling academic college advisors, and financial aid officer that coordinate FAFSA nights, college nights, and college tours. We have extended the learning beyond the classroom, which allows student to exemplify a positive connection with the surrounding community by volunteering countless hours and obtaining internships in different fields exposing them to a variety of potential career options.

In collaboration with the PSJA ISD Parental Engagement Program, PSJA Thomas Jefferson T-STEM Early College High School works continuously to maintain strong and powerful relationships with community partners to improve student achievement and increase opportunities for families to remain actively engaged in their child's learning. Living the district's vision of having all students College Ready, College Connected, and College Complete, we have designed our school culture to incorporate the required curriculum and support systems necessary to accomplish our objectives.

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	Draft	04/15/2017

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