Knocking It Out of the Park: Are You Ready to Submit Part A?

September 2, 2025
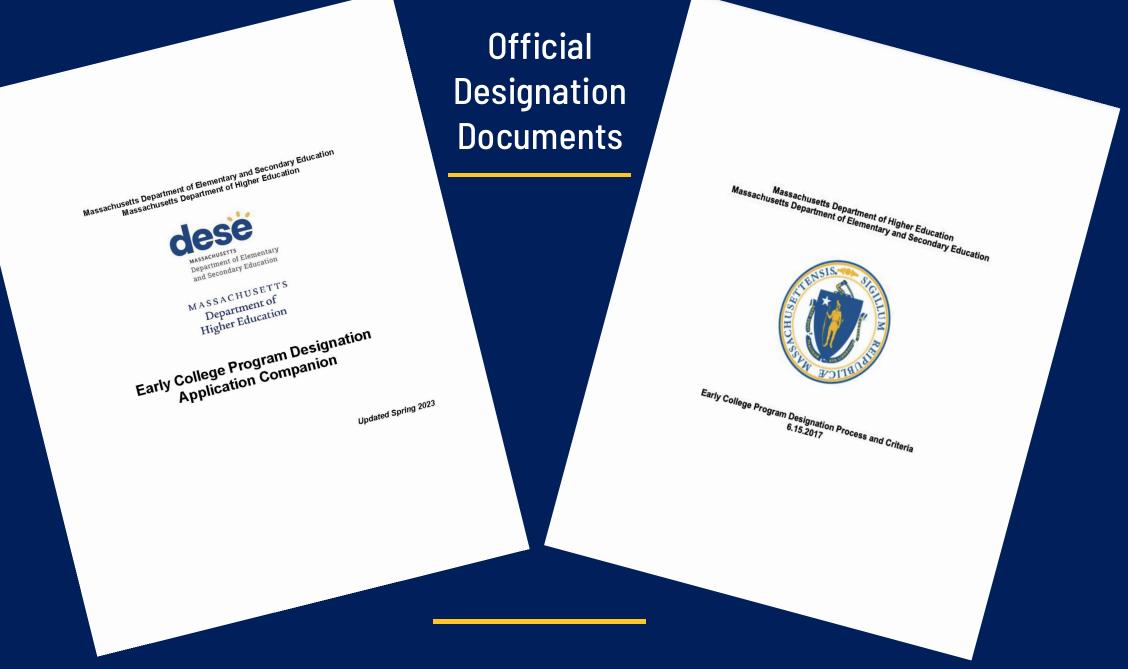
What We'll Cover

❖ Timeline Review

❖ Tips, Strategies, and Required Uploads

❖ Reviewing and Scoring a Submitted Application

❖ Expectations and Consideration of Program Design

❖ Resources, Upcoming Sessions, and Office Hours

Official Designation Documents

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

dese MASSACHUSETTS Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

MASSACHUSETTS Department of Higher Education

Early College Program Designation Application Companion

Updated Spring 2023

Massachusetts Department of Higher Education
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Early College Program Designation Process and Criteria
6.15.2017

Timeline Review

Today is July 22, 2025

2+ Weeks

September 19, 2025 – Application Due Date

By now, you should:

- ❖ ... be adding finishing touches to ALL answers and documents

- ❖ ... aiming for final review/discussion of the entire application next week (Don't forget to allow time for feedback from K12 and IHE admin.)

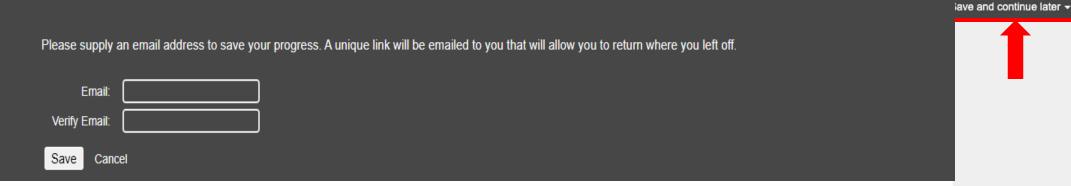NOTE: Consider starting to upload early the week of September 15.

Tips, Strategies, and Required Uploads

Alchemer Tip

Save and continue later ▾

Please supply an email address to save your progress. A unique link will be emailed to you that will allow you to return where you left off.

Email: [_____]

Verify Email: [_____]

Save   Cancel

Applicant Information

Application Instructions

This application may be completed in multiple sessions. You may save and return to this electronic application by providing your email address via the "save and continue later" button (see the grey "pull-down" in the top right corner.)

Please note that though all questions must be completed before submitting, the Applicant Contact Information sections contain "required" questions per survey settings. This will allow staff to provide technical assistance to applicants even while a survey is being completed, and has not yet been submitted.

A Word document copy of the application will be made available for reference in May, 2025.

For technical assistance with Alchemer, please contact Kelly Kennedy at Kelly.Kennedy@p2c.org.

K-12 Partner Applicant Contact Information

District Name *

High School Name *

Contact Information

On page 2 of the application in Alchemer, you are asked to provide contact information. Here, you should include contact information for the K-12 and IHE Leads.

K-12 Partner Applicant Contact Information *

District Name *

High School Name *

K-12 Lead Contact Person - First Name *

K-12 Lead Contact Person - Last Name *

K-12 Lead Contact Person - Title (e.g., Principal, Head of School, Executive Director) *

K-12 Lead Contact Person - E-mail *

K-12 Lead Contact Person - Phone Number

Tips and Strategies

❖ Always refer to the Early College Program Designation Application Companion Document when indicated to review "Components to Integrate."

❖ Answer <u>all</u> parts of each question.

❖ Don't leave a textbox empty.

❖ Be sure to upload <u>all</u> required documents.

❖ <u>Everyone</u> on the planning team should review the application and all documents prior to submitting.

❖ Make it as easy as possible for reviewers to find information.

Required Uploads

1. Equitable Access: Copy of School Demographic Data (template provided)
2. Equitable Access: Enrollment Policy
3. Guided Academic Pathways: Scope and Sequence (template provided)
4. Guided Academic Pathways: Course Schedules (template provided)
5. Guided Academic Pathways: Delivery of College Coursework (template provided)
6. Enhanced Student Supports: Plan for Supports (template provided)
7. Enhanced Student Supports: Support Staff – <u>K12</u> Job Description
8. Enhanced Student Supports: Support Staff – <u>IHE</u> Job Description
9. Effective Partnerships: Key Costs (template provided)

Reviewing and Scoring a Submitted Part A Application

Overarching Review Questions

❖ Is the proposed program equitable in design?

❖ Are partners proposing a program that is "a game changer" for EC students in a large enough scale? Will this program positively impact the school community as a whole?

❖ Are both partners equally involved in the development and proposed implementation of the program?

❖ Is the proposed program sustainable in design?

❖ Is it feasible for your program to launch in Fall of 2026 based on submitted Part A plans?

What do reviewers hope to see?

❖ Did the applicant partners fully answer the question? Did the response integrate the relevant Designation Criteria components?

❖ Did the applicant partners provide enough detail to demonstrate the intentionality of program design to meet Designation Criteria (always keeping equity in mind)?

Scoring of the Part A Application

❖ Submitted applications downloaded and shared with reviewers

  ❖ Beginning September 20

❖ DESE review of applications and associated documents

  ❖ September 22 through mid-October

❖ Announcements made directly to applicants; Part B Application emailed directly from the Office of Early College

  ❖ Mid- to Late October

"Incomplete"/Low Scoring Response

> 3. Please provide the program's initial plan for outreach and recruitment of students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education and would benefit from the Early College program.
>
> *Please refer to the Designation Criteria Companion Document for guidance regarding outreach and recruitment.*

Sample Response:

The recruitment plan will include all students. Recruitment will come from multiple staff in the school. Students most interested in the program will be able to enroll. Enrollment figures will be monitored during the recruitment process to ensure that goals are met.

"Strong" Response

> 3. Please provide the program's initial plan for outreach and recruitment of students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education and would benefit from the Early College program.
>
> *Please refer to the Designation Criteria Companion Document for guidance regarding outreach and recruitment.*

Sample Response:

A variety of outreach and recruitment methods will be used to ensure that students who might not opt into the Early College program learn about the opportunity. This includes: outreach by both the Special Education staff and ELL staff to intentionally recruit students who have different needs, and those for whom English is not a first language. Additionally, two community events will be held for parents and students. Flyers will also be mailed home to students who identify as underrepresented in higher education. Students who have expressed interest in careers that are supported by the EC pathways in their 9th grade survey (Business, Health, Education) will also be interviewed by guidance counselors to learn more about the EC program.

Expectations and Considerations for Program Design

Program Enrollment

Based on research, the most effective early college models are those that are either a self-contained school, or those with a critical mass cohort size, to allow for growth and exploration of students and prioritization of program priorities within respective institutions. One aim of this initiative, therefore, is to support this larger cohort model as well as the expansion of existing programs. That said, at this stage of Early College growth in Massachusetts, we appreciate that some programs are in nascent and startup stages, and in other cases, expansion is challenged by concerns about feasibility. Therefore, while there are no minimum initial cohort size requirements for applicants, the ECJC is likely to prioritize proposals with critical mass and may defer approval for plans it judges unlikely to be sustainable or cost-effective.

large scale Designated Early College program

vs.

targeted and highly intentional Designated Early College program

in partnership with

All Principles Lead to Equitable Access

Design Principles

Under the Early College Designation put forth by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE) and Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BESE), approved designated early college programs in Massachusetts will align with the following design principles:

1. **Equitable Access**
   targeting underrepresented students in higher education

2. **Guided Academic Pathways**
   that are well integrated and aligned with college and career

3. **Enhanced Student Support**
   in both academics and advising

4. **Connection to Career**
   through workplace and experiential learning experiences

5. **Effective Partnerships**
   between high schools and institutes of higher education

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Equitable Access & Program Enrollment

*"Designated programs should **prioritize** students **underrepresented in higher education enrollment and completion**. To facilitate this, programs should be structured to **eliminate barriers** to student participation. Design might therefore include, but not be limited to, tuition-free participation, open enrollment without regard to prior academic performance, student supports to promote success, scalability, multiple entry points for students, and student supports to prepare students for entry into the program."*

Extracted from the ECJC Designation Criteria Document (2017) and the Early College Program Designation Application Companion (2023)

Equitable Access in the Application

Equitable Access is embedded in each component of the application (and your program), particularly:

- ❖ recruitment and outreach
- ❖ program entry and participation
- ❖ college course taking
- ❖ student supports

In

SCHOOL SERVICES & INNOVATION

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High School Redesign

❖ Logistics to accommodate program
  - ❖ Staffing
  - ❖ Scheduling
  - ❖ Student supports
  - ❖ Transportation
❖ Realigning mission and vision
❖ Building effective partnerships

Questions?

Session Resources and Office Hours

Resources

❖ [Link to Part A Application via Alchemer](#)

❖ [Companion Document](#)

❖ [Early College Resource Site: Designation Applicants' Landing Page](#)

Applications Due No Later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 19!

Office Hours

❖ **DESE's Office of Early College** is available to assist applicants throughout the designation process. To schedule a dedicated time slot with Danielle Wheeler, Director of Early College programs, click HERE.

❖ **P2C Office Hours** are held on Wednesdays from 2:00-3:00 p.m. and Thursdays from 9:00-10:00 a.m. Click HERE to reserve a 15-minute time slot.

THANK YOU!

Danielle Wheeler

Director of Programs
Office of Early College,
DESE

Kelly Kennedy

Program Manager,
Education Services
Pathway2Careers

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