Equitable Access SUPPORT WORKSHOP

Tuesday, Sept. 1st 2026

9:30-10:30 am

Welcome

Meet the Support Team



Lily Newman

- DESE OEC Project Manager/Policy Specialist
- Former EC program leader
- Executive Director & Lead Consultant at LaunchEDU



Kelly Kennedy

- Program Manager, Education Services, P2C
- Former K12 and IHE Administrator
- Supported MA Early College Designation since early 2020

Agenda

1. Opening and Session Outcomes
2. Breakout Session Previews
    a. Needs Assessment
    b. Program Scale and Enrollment Policy
3. Breakout Groups
4. Share Out and Discussion
5. Closing and Next Steps
6. Optional Q&A

We recommend you split your team where doable to attend both breakout sessions.



FY27 Early College Theme



Session Outcomes

This session is a follow up to the Partnering for Equitable Access training and supports the development of your EC Design Plan.

By the end of the session, you will:

1. Have pressing questions answered for this stage of the Planning Phase.
2. Have a clear understanding of key design features for Equitable Access including
    a. Needs Assessment
    b. Program Scale
    c. Enrollment Policy
3. Be prepared to effectively develop the Equitable Access components of the Design Plan with your team.

This session is for YOU.

To ensure you get what you need out of this session, we invite you to



- Share your voice and unique perspective.
- Ask questions and follow up questions as needed.
- Test your ideas by sharing examples and getting feedback.
- Reach out to your coach for 1:1 support.

Planning Phase Learning Hub

Planning Phase Learning Hub

Massachusetts FY27 Early College Designation: Planning Phase



dese

EARLY STARTS. Endless Possibilities.

COLLEGE READY. CAREER READY. LIFE READY.

MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education

Breakout Group Previews



Breakout groups will focus on 3 key areas in response to your survey feedback.

Main Room: Kelly

- **Needs Assessment:** Use data from school profiles and other sources to determine need for an Early College program, target populations for recruiting and enrolling, and how you will prioritize populations underrepresented in higher education.

Breakout #1: Lily

- **Scale:** Discuss requirements and reviewer criteria. Identify strategies and effective practice for scale and scaling plans. Review samples.

- **Enrollment Policy:** Review success criteria and analyze a model. Discuss nuances and questions. Preview course enrollment.

Breakout Groups



NEEDS ASSESSMENT



Needs Assessment

Your Design Plan response should answer the following questions:

- Does the data support the need for an Early College program? How?
- What target populations traditionally underrepresented in higher education should I focus on recruiting and enrolling?
- How will I prioritize those students?



Needs Assessment Review Criteria



To be assessed as READY in this area, reviewers will look for Needs Assessments that meet the following criteria:

- **Clear, data-based rationale explains local need** and interest and how Early College will reduce disparities.
- **Demographic analyses are comprehensive and findings directly shape recruitment, enrollment** targets, supports, pathways, and program design.
- **Priority underrepresented populations are explicit** and aligned to statewide goals and inform rationale and program design. Address how you plan to prioritize underrepresented populations.

SCALE GOALS & PLANS





Scale Goals: Start with the Vision

What is the purpose of Early College in your context and how will it serve your students and community? Where does it sit within the wider school and system?

» How many students should the program serve for meaningful change in college access rates for the target population? What model will make most sense?

- **Wall-to-Wall:** All students are enrolled in Early College and it is the primary program that drives the school model.
- **Program within a broader program:** Some strategic portion of students are enrolled in Early College and it complements the other programs at the school.
- **Regional cohort model:** May be a narrow focus on a specific target group and scale may be achieved across multiple schools.

SCALE GOALS AND PLANS

Section sizes and numbers

- Will section sizes cover costs?
- Will they allow student movement or course choice or require rigid cohorts?

Section sizes should reliably cover an agreed-upon amount for the IHE to sustain. programming.

Ensuring min. 2 cohorts per grade allows options for students and scheduling.

Enrollment and staffing capacity

- Will the scale be sustainable to and through 12th grade/full scale?
- What will the staffing impact be?

Pressure test scenarios through full scale to ensure sustainability.

Staffing impacts vary. A careful scale plan can ensure net positive impact.

Impact on schoolwide culture

- Is the program a meaningful part of the school?
- Are all students exposed and likely to interact with it?

When programs include a significant population, the word spreads and positively impacts the college-going mindset of all students.

Pacing implementation

- For student interest, realistic recruitment.
- For staff and program change.

Recruitment takes time - set reasonable pacing goals. Program changes need to be thoughtfully paced for staff and system adjustments.

Sample Scale Plan

	Projected # of EC Students-Fall Semester				Projected # of EC Students-Spring Semester				Total # of Projected EEC Students. By End of Academic Year (count graduating class)			
Grade	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12
Y1	**50**				**50**				**50**			
Y2	**130**				**130**				**130**			
Y3	**230**				**230**				**230**			
Y4	**280**				**280**				**280**			
Y5	**300**				**300**				**300**			

Total High School Enrollment: 1200

Total Early College Enrollment Goal: 300 or 30%

Sample Scale Plan - By Grade Level

	Projected # of EC Students in Fall Semester				Projected # of EC Students in Spring Semester				Total # of Projected EC Students by End of Academic			
Grade	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**
Y1	**50**				**50**				**50**			
	0	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	50	0	0
Y2	**130**				**130**				**130**			
	0	80	50	0	0	80	50	0	0	80	50	0
Y3	**230**				**230**				**230**			
	0	100	80	50	0	100	80	50	0	100	80	50
Y4	**280**				**280**				**280**			
	0	100	100	80	0	100	100	80	0	100	100	80
Y5	**300**				**300**				**300**			
	0	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	0	100	100	100

Total High School Enrollment: 1200

Total Early College Enrollment Goal: 300 or 30%

Enrollment & Scale Review Criteria



To be assessed as READY in this area, reviewers will look for enrollment and scale plans that meet the following criteria:

- **Clear five-year enrollment plan** reaches sustainable scale.
- **Targets prioritize populations underrepresented in higher education** and connect to demographic need/access goals.
- **Key factors are explicit,** including maximum size, year reached, rationale, and sustainability.

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT POLICY



Enrollment Policy & Plan Essentials

Policy should be as broad as possible and should not exclude students based on prior or current GPA, test scores, or placement scores, nor based solely on other subjective processes (e.g., teacher recommendation). Ideally program enrollment is open to all interested students.

The policy should also account for appropriate processes to ensure sustainability of special populations of students participation.

Policy might be designed to require students meet minimal benchmarks of attendance, and engagement to participate. However students should have the option to receive support to improve and still be considered for program enrollment.

If the number of student applicants exceeds the number of available seats, participation will be determined by a lottery. Should a lottery be used, the policy should allow for prioritization of underserved students.

Model Policy Language

Model program enrollment policy for an EC program within a larger high school.*

Review the plan via the QR code or link in the chat.

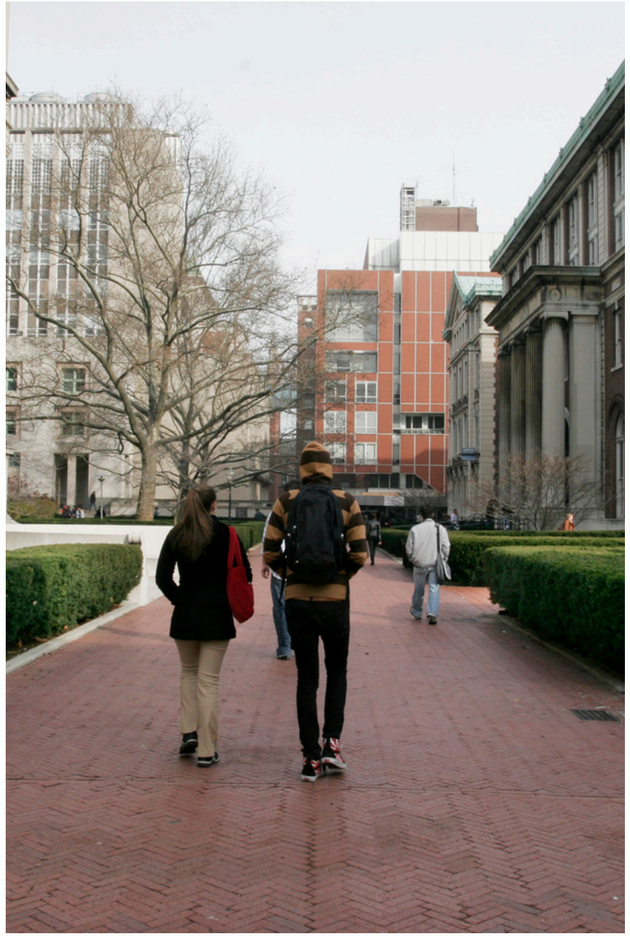
Discuss areas of strength, questions or concerns.

Wall-to-wall model program enrollment policy*

For the past few years, [our high school] has operated as a district-wide Early College campus. That means all high school students are automatically enrolled in the program and have access to college-level courses at no cost, with credits guaranteed to transfer to Massachusetts public colleges and universities and widely accepted by institutions across the country.

*All program policies, samples and resources are shared with permission from the programs.

Enrollment Policy & Plan Review Criteria



To be assessed as READY in this area, reviewers will look for plans that meet the following criteria:

- **Clear enrollment policy ensures equitable access** and prioritizes students underrepresented in higher education.
- **Program enrollment is distinct from college course enrollment,** or course-taking as entry is clearly explained.
- **Enrollment policy removes barriers,** including those that are academic, financial, recommendation-based, and subjective.

Sharing and Discussion



Share Very Important Points



Share three **Very Important Points** from each focus area.

- Needs Assessment
- Program Scale Goals and Plans
- Program Enrollment Policy



Closing and Next Steps

Design Plan Milestones & Artifacts

Principle	Milestones	Products/Deliverables
Equitable Access	Determine your vision, population served, and enrollment plans.	Needs Assessment Enrollment & Scale plan. Outreach and Recruitment Plan Enrollment Policy Student Application/Commitment Form
Guided Academic Programs	Develop strategic course sequences and the schedules and structures to support them.	Schedules Course Scope and Sequences Academic Policies Transfer Plan
Enhanced Student Supports	Map out the intentional supports for the full range of learners. to succeed.	Academic and Non-academic Support Grid Advising Plan
Connection to Career	Refine guided programs of study to intentionally integrate career-connected learning.	MYCAP & Career Development Activities Industry Engagement Plan
Effective Partnerships	Define goals and metrics for program evaluation; finalize partnership plan.	Early College Staffing Plan Budget Partnership MOU Evaluation Plan

Professional Learning & Support Dates

Item	Date
Professional Learning (PL) Session #1: Partnering for Equitable Access (GP 1&5)	Aug 18, 2026
Workshop – coaching support for session #1	**Sep 1, 2026**
PL Session #2: Scaffolded Pathways for Success - Guiding Principles 2 & 4	Sep 15, 2026
Workshop – coaching support for session #2	Sep 29, 2026
PL Session #3: Supporting Every Student (GP 3)	Oct 13, 2026
Workshop – coaching support for session #3	Oct 27, 2026
PL Session #4: Evaluation and Systems for Results (GP 5)	Nov 10, 2026
Workshop – coaching support for session #4	Nov 17, 2026
Webinar: Are you Ready to Submit	Dec 1, 2026
Program Design Plans Due	Jan 8, 2027
Program Design Plan Approvals	**March 2027 (June**

Resources



The following resources can be accessed to support teams as you develop the Design Plan details for Equitable Access:

Resources Title	Type
Needs Assessment	Template
Planning Phase Learning Hub	Canvas-based Portal
Design Plan Survey in Alchemer	Alchemer Survey
Design Plan Survey in .docx Format	Word Document
Schedule a Meeting with DESE Office of Early College	Link to OEC Calendar

NOTE: Additional resources, including sample artifacts, will be found on the Planning Phase Learning Hub. Invites for the hub will be going out later today.


Thank You