



# **MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF EARLY COLLEGE**

## **Transitioning to Full Designation Information for the 2018 Cohort of Early College Designated Programs April 2026**

A Partnership Between  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Office of Early College  
and  
Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
Transition Purpose and Goals .....	4
Full and Conditional Designation Status .....	4
Full Designation Definition and Purpose .....	4
Conditional Designation Definition and Purpose .....	5
Achieving Full Designation .....	6
Indicators and Evidence .....	6
Transition Process and Timeline .....	8
Appendix A .....	11
Early College Criteria by Designation Phase .....	11

Revised May 1, 2026

## Introduction

Welcome to all current Designated Early College (EC) programs who will transition to the updated process and criteria for Full Designation in the coming years. This transition process is unique to programs designated prior to the new Designation Phases approach applied in 2026. The initial expectation for these programs was that they would apply for Re-Designation after five years. The new approach replaces the Re-Designation title and concept with Full Designation status, the culmination of the new Designation Phases recently introduced. Since current Designees will not go through the full Phases, this transition process will bridge current Designees to Full Designation.

### For the 2018 Cohort

In 2018, the first cohort of Early College programs received state Designation status, applicable for five years, and officially launched. In 2021, as these programs entered their fourth year of Designation, their initial Designation status was extended an additional year to 2023-2024 due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic. In 2023, the decision was made to again extend the initial Designation status for three additional years for the earliest cohorts to accommodate the statewide strategic planning that would impact the Designation process. In 2025, new Designation phases were approved and this spring (2026), we are beginning the process of transitioning the 2018 cohort, the longest standing programs, into Full Designation status.

This transition process will be fine-tuned based on their input. The transition process will conclude with the 2026 cohort of Designees in June 2031, as all programs beginning the Phases this spring will be fully aligned to the new approach and will not require a transition. **This resource is a companion document to the 2026 Transition Orientation presentation for 2018 Programs.** It includes all information covered during that session and what is needed for programs to build understanding of the transition process to Full Designation status.

**Note:** This information includes the process for all programs, but the timeline applies specifically to the 2018 cohort.

### For the 2019 Cohort and beyond

- It is expected that all programs will follow a similar process with minor adjustments based on feedback.
- The timeline for each cohort will be adapted and shared in the coming months and will begin in 2027.
- Programs will all be supported to set goals to reach Full Designation and complete Full Designation Plans.

Revised May 1, 2026

## Transition Purpose and Goals

The transition process is designed to support all programs designated prior to the implementation of the Phases approach **to reach the Full Designation criteria aligned to the statewide goals for Early College.**

The MA Early College Initiative continues to be identified as a priority for the Commonwealth with a goal to grow the initiative dramatically over the next 10 years, expanding access to high quality programs in order to increase college matriculation, persistence and degree attainment rates. The transition process to the Full Designation criteria ensures participating students meet the EC statewide definitions that evidence shows lead to the greatest positive impact for students:

### **An EC Participant is a student who**

- Is in grade level 9, 10, 11, or 12
- Is enrolled in a high school that has a Designated EC program
- Has signed a program commitment form
- Is identified as participating in EC by the district in October and/or June SIMS

### **An EC Program Completer is a student who**

- Graduated from a high school with a designated early college program
- Was identified as participating in early college by the district in October SIMS in both 11th and 12th grade (at minimum)
- Earned 12 or more transferable college credits
- Completed 100% of MassCore block

**Note:** This definition may be updated in the near future to include factors such as the completion of FAFSA, (or MASFA, or a waiver) as well as the completion of one or more college applications.

## Full and Conditional Designation Status

### Full Designation Definition and Purpose

Full Designation Status is intended for programs with proven results to move to a more autonomously directed phase for Early College.

- **Full Designation status is achieved when programs demonstrate consistent quality** and outcomes that meet the Full Designation indicators, typically by the end of five years of Initial Designation.

## TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

- Those meeting Full Designation indicators **move into a phase with minimal monitoring (i.e. completing 2 year reports)** and a focus on their own fine-tuned goals.
- Programs **submit a Full Designation Plan with 4-year goals and annual benchmarks** to reach them, along with updated program information to reflect the sustainable, long term program design.

### **Programs with Full Designation status will:**

- **Have minimal oversight** based on maintaining or exceeding Full Designation indicators as evidenced by annual data reporting.
- **Be funded with the same strategy as currently applied** for the foreseeable future (per-credit reimbursements and grants).
- **Complete biennial reports, resetting** goals and benchmarks and noting minor changes every two years rather than annually.
- **Be encouraged to set ambitious goals** and supported to implement effective practices to reach them.
- **Submit a Program Modification form** for any significant changes to program design. \*
- **Continue to have their quantitative outcomes reviewed** through annual statewide data reporting.

*\*Programs deemed to have significant changes to program design may be asked to participate in a new Planning Phase to ensure continued alignment with Designation criteria.*

**If programs have significant challenges meeting the minimum indicators and therefore will require more time to reach the expectations of Full Designation, a Conditional Designation Status will be awarded to provide more time, supports and monitoring as programs continue to work towards Full Designation.**

## Conditional Designation Definition and Purpose

Conditional Designation Status is intended for programs who need more time or additional support to reach Full Designation. Conditional Designation:

- **Is a 3-year status** that occurs when programs are not yet meeting indicators for Full Designation after 5 years of Initial Designation.
- **Is communicated internally to programs but not publicly shared.**
- **Continues all aspects of Designation continue including funding and supports.**
- **Includes monitoring of goals and progress** towards the Full Designation indicators.
- **May also occur if programs in Full Designation do not maintain minimum indicators** for 2 consecutive years.

## TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

### Programs with Conditional Designation status will

- **Have a support plan** to reach goals with coaching for implementation.
- **Be eligible to reapply for Full Designation** during year 3.
- **Maintain their current funding** and continue to be eligible for credit reimbursement and grants.

**In extreme and rare circumstances, programs may not be approved for Full Designation after being in Conditional Designation** and therefore may lose their Designation status at that time if they:

- Fail to demonstrate consistent progress towards Full Designation indicators outcomes.
- Fail to adhere to the five guiding principles and corresponding Designation criteria

## Achieving Full Designation

### Indicators and Evidence

Since the goal of Early College is to get more students to and through college, the 2017 criteria identified the most important metrics for evaluating EC success that directly support that goal. These indicators have been refined in the 2025 recommendations based on nationwide research, alignment with Massachusetts policies and statewide goals, as well as analysis of program data over the last several years of EC implementation in the state. These indicators have always formed the basis for Designation and for the original submissions of Parts A and B. They now form the basis for the expectations in the Planning Phase and during Initial Designation and are the goals to meet for Full Designation.

### Indicators by Phase

The statewide Designation Criteria has been built upon best practices both in the Commonwealth and across the nation. When Early College Designation was first launched, the criteria were identified but without a clear framework for how programs would be evaluated. The new Designation Phases alleviate this uncertainty by outlining the indicators of effective implementation at each phase of Designation.

*For the complete Designation indicators mapped out by Designation Phase, see Appendix A.*

### Quantitative Indicators

These indicators are the **priority outcomes on which Full Designation status is based** and that drive transition benchmarks for programs. **They** were derived from the original 2017 Designation criteria under Principle 5: Effective Partnerships.

The two main sources of quantitative data used to review program outcomes are the EC Data Dashboard, accessed through the E2C Data Hub, and the MA DESE School Profiles.

# TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

## Qualitative Indicators

These indicators are the **priority inputs and program design elements** that are proven strategies to achieve the priority outcomes. They are used to drive implementation plans and goals to get to Full Designation. They are examined as part of the Full Designation process to better understand areas of success and challenge in reaching the priority outcomes, and used to drive feedback, goal setting and program support as they work towards Full Designation.

There are several sources from which qualitative data can be accessed. These include the original Designation application, the Annual Reports submitted by programs, the three-year reviews (**Pathway Partnership Reviews** or **PPRs**), and the fifth-year reviews (**Designation Profile Reviews** or **DPRs**), a cumulative summary of all other reports.

## Data and Evidence Sources

The chart below summarizes the Full Designation indicators listed in Appendix A, along with data and evidence sources that program partnerships and the OEC will review to determine program progress towards each indicator. Sources include the Early College Data Dashboard, other statewide data sources such as School Profiles, Designation Review Reports (DPRs), other reports and information gathered over time by OEC, and a Transition Survey.

### The Transition Survey

Program partners will begin to review both their quantitative and qualitative data to determine strengths and areas of growth aligned to the Full Designation indicators. Recognizing that there may be missing information about programs from the data sources the OEC has access to, a transition survey has been developed which enables programs to submit additional data, evidence and explanations to ensure they are fully represented.

Guiding Principle	Indicators	Primary Source	Secondary source
1 – Equitable Access	Evidence of meeting program enrollment targets including the <b>prioritization of underrepresented students.</b>	EC Dashboard data	DPR*
	<i>Qualitative:</i> Equitable outreach, recruitment, and enrollment plan that prioritizes students underrepresented in higher education.	DPR	Survey Submission
2 – Guided Academic Programs	The <b>majority of participants complete 12+ credits</b> by high school graduation.	EC Dashboard data	DPR
	All EC participants graduate high school on time or early	Other public data	DPR
	All EC participants meet MassCore requirements at time of HS graduation	EC Dashboard data	DPR
	Majority of EC participants are enrolled by 11 <sup>th</sup> grade and <b>persist</b> in the program in 12th grade.	Dashboard data	DPR

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

	<i>Qualitative:</i> Clear course scope and sequences that include academic preparation for college credits as well as college credits and supports embedded into school day and students exposed to a college environment.	DPR	Survey Submission
	<i>Qualitative:</i> Clearly stated Academic policies pertaining to course-taking in Early College program	Survey Submission	Other data-Institutions' website
	Majority of courses attempted by <b>EC students are successfully completed</b> (earn a grade of at least a C- each academic year)**	Dashboard data	
3 – Enhanced Student Supports	<b>All EC 12th graders complete FAFSA, MAFA or a waiver.</b>	Other public data	Survey Submission
	All EC 12 <sup>th</sup> graders complete at least one college application by HS graduation	Survey Submission	
	<i>Qualitative:</i> Wraparound support services, both academic and non-academic, intentionally designed to support the program’s specific EC students.	DPR	Survey Submission
4 – Connection to Career	<b>EC participants in each grade level have developed their MYCAP.</b>	Survey Submission	
	<i>Qualitative:</i> Robust plan to incorporate career development and co-curricular career exposure opportunities.	DPR	Survey Submission
5 – Effective Partnerships	Demonstrated <b>increase in immediate college enrollment</b> rates.	Dashboard data	DPR
	The majority of <b>EC graduates that enroll in college persist from their first to second year.</b>	Dashboard data	
	<i>Given the time required to achieve, the following indicator will be reviewed once programs have reached Full Designation:</i> Demonstrated progress in college degree completion with a majority of <b>EC graduates who enroll in post-secondary earning a degree within 6 years.</b>	Other public data	
	<i>Qualitative:</i> Demonstration of effective partnership with updated comprehensive MOU, updated partnership budget, and updated EC program strategic plan	Survey Submission	

\* Other reports, such as PPR, annual reports may also be referenced as needed

\*\*Currently OEC has course pass rates, but will transition data reporting to course grades in the future

## Transition Process and Timeline

### 2018 Cohort Timeline

Item	Date
<b>Orientation: Transitioning to Full Designation</b>	April 30, 2026
<b>Transition Survey Opens</b>	May 1, 2026
<b>Programs Review Data</b>	Summer 2026

## TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

<b>Transition Office Hours: Intro to the Transition Survey and Next Steps</b> All programs by appointment to set transition priorities	Summer 2026
<b>Transition Survey Due</b>	October 2, 2026
<b>Transition Survey Initial Review Returned to Programs</b>	November 2, 2026
<b>Webinar: Part 2: Planning the Future</b>	November 12, 2026
<b>Full Designation Plan Opens</b>	November 13, 2026
<b>Office Hours</b>	November- March 2027
<b>Full Designation Plan Due</b>	March 26, 2027
<b>Full Designation Plan Reviews</b>	April – May 2027
<b>Full Designation Approvals - ECJC</b>	June 2027

### Preparing to Transition: Program Action Steps

As noted, Full Designation indicators form the basis of your application for Designation, your annual reports, your PPRs and DPRs. Quantitative data aligned to these indicators is included in the EC Data Dashboard. All programs can begin to review and understand their progress towards these indicators and evaluate areas for priority action in the coming year.

#### To begin to evaluate progress and priority action steps, programs

- **Review quantitative data as provided through the Data Summary Sheets, emailed directly to partnerships, and the [EC Data Dashboard](#).**
- **Review Past Designation Program Reviews** (DPRs- also referred to as 5<sup>th</sup> year reviews) and other feedback provided by DESE, as well as any internal reviews, to better understand areas of success and challenge in your complete program that can shed light on how to improve your outcomes.
- **Use the Full Designation Planning Worksheets** provided during Transition Orientation to document areas that are on track for Full Designation or reasonably attainable and those areas that present a challenge given the timeline.

### Transition Supports

- **Office hours:** For individual program's nuanced questions and supports
- **Streamlined data summaries:** Executive summaries of each program's DPR and key data for setting transition goals.
- **Assistance in setting transition goals:** Leveraging current data to set strategic benchmarks to reach Full Designation.
- **Continued funding as it is currently available:** Credit reimbursement to IHEs. Grants for K12.
- **Assistance in developing Full Designation Plans:** Support for planning and compiling updated information for submission.

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

Revised May 1, 2026

## Appendix A

### Early College Criteria by Designation Phase

#### Purpose and Use

This is an overview of what Designated programs must demonstrate, aligned to the Massachusetts Early College Guiding Principles, to enter and complete each of the phases of Early College Designation: Planning Phase, Initial Designation and Full Designation.

#### *Designation Criteria, Indicators and Evidence*

<b>Designation Criteria:</b> The essential components of Designated programs and plans aligned with each Guiding Principle.		
<b>Indicators and Evidence:</b> Specific examples of how programs implement the Criterion at each phase.		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
Includes key evidence and indicators required to <b>enter the <u>Planning Phase</u></b> , captured in the <b><u>Commitment to EC Program Design</u></b>	Includes key evidence and indicators programs must demonstrate to <b>achieve <u>Initial Designation</u></b> . This includes completion of the <b><u>MA Early College Program Design Plan</u></b> .	Includes the key evidence and indicators for Initial Designation, as well as evidence of sustained implementation, strategic growth and improvement to <b>achieve <u>Full Designation</u></b> . See the <b><u>Plan for Full Designation</u></b> .

#### Criteria by Guiding Principle

##### Guiding Principle 1: Equitable Access

1.1 Demonstration of Need: Partners provide a clear rationale and evidence of need for a Designated Early College program to increase college-going rates at each partner high school.		
Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to increasing college participation through targeted strategies.</li> <li>• Clear rationale for program that includes an initial data review.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed needs assessment meets all elements of criterion.</li> <li>• Strategic enrollment goals for five years developed from school data to increase college enrollments and/or close disparities in college enrollment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of meeting strategic enrollment goals as demonstrated by Annual Reports; PPR and DPR reports and annual statewide data.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated needs assessment as needed.</li> </ul>
--	---	---

<p><b>1.2 Scale:</b> The program has established and met goals for enrollment of sufficient size to sustain the program while prioritizing enrollment of students from populations underrepresented in postsecondary education.</p>		
<p><b>Indicators and Evidence</b></p>		
<p><b>Planning Phase</b></p>	<p><b>Initial Designation</b></p>	<p><b>Full Designation</b></p>
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance that partners have had initial discussions about program scale and sustainable cohort sizes</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust data-driven plan to scale program over the next five years with rationale and goals provided for sustainability.</li> <li>• Plan demonstrates how the program will increase college going rates at the K12 institutions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of meeting program enrollment targets including the prioritization of underrepresented students through annual statewide data.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability plan for continued evaluation and refinement of program size and demographics.</li> </ul>

<p><b>1.3 Outreach and Recruitment:</b> The program has coherent, effective communication tools and strategies to recruit students, prioritizing student populations historically underrepresented in higher education, and to inform key constituents about the program.</p>		
<p><b>Indicators and Evidence</b></p>		
<p><b>Planning Phase</b></p>	<p><b>Initial Designation</b></p>	<p><b>Full Designation</b></p>
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance that initial community consult has taken place and confirmed sufficient program interest.</li> <li>• Commitment to develop a plan with intentional</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully developed outreach and recruitment plan with a calendar of events that includes communication tools and strategies to be implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program consistently meets goals for outreach and recruitment as demonstrated by Annual Reports, PPR and DPR reports</li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated outreach and recruitment plan that</li> </ul>

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

<p>outreach, recruitment and enrollment strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process for annual review and updates to improve outreach and recruitment.</li> </ul>	<p>demonstrates how any prior challenges are being addressed.</p>
---	--	---

<p><b>1.4. Enrollment Plan and Policy:</b> A clear, well-communicated, and consistently implemented program enrollment plan and policy is in place that ensures equitable access to the EC program by eliminating barriers to participation and prioritizing students from populations historically underrepresented in higher education.</p>		
<p><b>Indicators and Evidence</b></p>		
<p><b>Planning Phase</b></p>	<p><b>Initial Designation</b></p>	<p><b>Full Designation</b></p>
<p><b><i>In Commitment to EC Program Design</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to open program enrollment to the extent possible.</li> <li>• Commitment to start EC cohort by 10<sup>th</sup> grade</li> <li>• Commitment to eliminating participation barriers for students underrepresented in higher education.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive program enrollment policy addressing historical barriers to access, and an equitable plan for enrollment if interest exceeds capacity.</li> <li>• 5-year enrollment plan based on analysis of school data includes specific enrollment goals to increase the K12 partners' college going rates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment policy and plan is consistently implemented and improved as evidenced by current Enrollment plan.</li> <li>• Enrollment goals are consistently met over time as demonstrated by Annual Reports, PPR and DPR reports and annual statewide data reports.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Enrollment plan addresses program enrollment sustainability over the next 5 years and demonstrates solutions to prior enrollment challenges.</li> </ul>

Guiding Principle 2: Guided Academic Programs

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2.1 Guided Program(s) of Study:</b> The program has clearly defined and well-communicated academic program(s) of study, including on-ramping coursework, defined scope and sequence of coursework, and other requirements to ensure student preparation and success within the program.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Indicators and Evidence</b></p>		
<p><b>Planning Phase</b></p>	<p><b>Initial Designation</b></p>	<p><b>Full Designation</b></p>
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to ensure EC works effectively alongside other high school programs.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully developed academic programs of study covering at least two high school grade levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual data that demonstrate program has consistently met baseline indicators for credit attainment:</li> </ul>

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance to identify preliminary guided academic program and potential courses that are widely transferable and meet high school graduation requirements, MassCore and MassTransfer.</li> </ul>	<p>that enables students to earn at least 12 transferable credits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crosswalk of college coursework aligned to MassCore, local high school graduation requirements, MassTransfer*, and A2B Pathways.</li> <li>Schedules demonstrate how the EC program will be delivered within the school day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The majority of EC participants complete 12+ credits by high graduation.</li> <li>All EC participants will graduate high school on time or early</li> <li>All EC participants will meet MassCore requirements at time of high school graduation.</li> </ul> <p><b>In Full Designation Plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documented systems and strategies in place for program review and refinement of Academic Programs of Study</li> </ul>
---	--	---

<p><b>2.2 Commitment to Academic Preparation for All Students:</b> The program demonstrates a commitment to the success of all EC students by conducting regular curriculum alignment between high school and college coursework; identifying multiple alternative measures to demonstrate course readiness; and implementing individualized onboarding strategies to the program to prepare all students to meet one or more of the readiness measures.</p>		
Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
<p><b>In Commitment to Program Design:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment to support regular vertical curriculum alignment.</li> <li>Commitment to ensure multiple alternative measures of course readiness to increase access to college coursework.</li> </ul>	<p><b>In Program Design Plan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Description and outline of curriculum alignment between the HS(s) and IHE(s) demonstrates how it supports EC readiness.</li> <li>Description of multiple measures to demonstrate college course readiness and how the approach removes barriers.</li> <li>Onboarding plan outlines student support to reach at least one measure of college readiness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent and effective academic preparation for students to onboard to college coursework as evidenced by Annual Reports; PPR reports, and DPR Statewide data reports</li> </ul> <p>Statewide data reflects program has consistently met benchmarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Majority of EC participants are enrolled in program by 11<sup>th</sup> grade and persist in program through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.</li> </ul> <p><b>In Full Designation Plan:</b> Updated Onboarding plan that increases student readiness.</p>

**2.3 Course Modalities and Scheduling:** Programs provide a rationale for course modalities and instructional approach, including who leads and who supports the course and how a course is delivered,

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

<p>whether in-person, hybrid or virtual. Programs demonstrate how courses, regardless of modality, are incorporated into the school day and strategically supported.</p>		
Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance of preliminary schedule review and commitment to scheduling to support initial Designation.</li> <li>Assurance that students will have free, embedded resources and technology necessary to complete EC programming, and effective supports</li> <li>Commitment to immersive college experiences.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EC integrated schedules by grade level.</li> <li>Plan for course staffing and delivery by grade level with rationale.</li> <li>Technology and digital equity plan.</li> <li>Description of college acclimation plan and immersive experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent implementation of effective scheduling, technology access and support strategies, and immersive college experiences as evidenced by Annual Reports; PPR and DPR reports; Student surveys (if available)</li> <li>Statewide data demonstrates:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Majority of courses attempted by EC students are successfully completed (earn a grade of at least a C- each academic year).*</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated course delivery plan with refined strategies for student success.</li> <li>Updated course and program schedules as needed.</li> </ul>

\*Currently OEC has course pass rates, but will transition data reporting to course grades in the future

<p><b>2.4 Academic Policies:</b> All academic policies pertaining to the program and all partners are aligned and communicated to students and caregivers. This includes course enrollment, grading, failures, transferability, add/drop policies, and early intervention supports.</p>		
Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitment to alignment and distribution of all EC-related academic policies.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligned academic policies pertaining to each institution that ensure multiple, alternative measures are used and supports are provided to mitigate withdrawals and failures.</li> <li>A transfer crosswalk that demonstrates how the program of study maximizes course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent implementation of clear and supportive academic policies aligned across all partners as evidenced by Annual Reports, PPR and DPR reports</li> <li>Demonstration that courses in Early College academic programs of study are transferable (exception for FYE courses) including evidence that majority</li> </ul>

Revised May 1, 2026

	<p>transferability to the extent possible.</p>	<p>of EC college credits are being accepted at MA public IHE's</p> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated academic policies that address prior areas of challenge or opportunity.</li> <li>• Updated transfer crosswalk that improves transferability as needed.</li> </ul>
--	--	--

Guiding Principle 3: Enhanced Student Supports

<p><b>3.1. Comprehensive Academic Support</b> is coordinated among partners and integrated into the high school schedule. It includes differentiated supports aligned to the specific program population, and individualized academic advising.</p>		
Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance to develop plan to provide shared, embedded academic supports.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic support plan clarifies how supports are shared between partners and targeted to the specific student population during the school day.</li> <li>• Academic advising policy and plan demonstrates how students receive predictable, robust advising throughout the program and transition to college.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent implementation of robust, shared academic support plan, customized to student population, as evidenced by Annual Reports; PPR and DPR reports, and student and family surveys if available</li> <li>• Data demonstrates program has consistently met baseline benchmarks over time related to academic progress (see quantitative indicators under Guiding Principle 2)</li> </ul>

<p><b>3.2. Comprehensive Non-Academic Support</b> is coordinated among partners and integrated into the school schedule. It includes college advising and planning, financial aid planning and support, career planning and support (see Guiding Principle 4), and ensures students can access other non-academic support provided by each partner.</p>		
Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance to develop plan and implement non-academic supports shared by all partners embedded in the schedule.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive plan for non-academic supports that are shared by partners.</li> <li>Schedule of embedded supports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent implementation of robust, shared non-academic support plan, customized to student population, as evidenced by Annual Reports; PPR and DPR reports and student surveys if available.</li> <li>Statewide Data demonstrates over time that             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All EC 12<sup>th</sup> graders will complete FAFSA (MAFSA or a waiver) by time of HS graduation.</li> <li>All EC 12<sup>th</sup> graders complete at least one college application</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
--	--	--

Guiding Principle 4: Connections to Career

<p><b>4.1 Career Development Plan</b> including career exploration and development activities, is fully integrated into program and aligned with students' MyCAP.</p>		
<p><b>Indicators and Evidence</b></p>		
<p><b>Planning Phase</b></p>	<p><b>Initial Designation</b></p>	<p><b>Full Designation</b></p>
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance to develop plan for career development connected to Early College courses.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A career exploration and development plan (MyCAP aligned) that intentionally connects to academic programs of study and leverages an online tool for effective, personalized planning.</li> <li>Schedule of career activities integrated into EC programming.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career exploration and development indicators are consistently met over time as evidenced by annual Reports; PPR and DPR reports; annual data outcomes.</li> <li>Evidence that EC participants in each grade level have developed MYCAP (academic and career plan)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated career exploration and development plan that refines pathway alignment and expands career experiences and opportunities.</li> </ul>

Revised May 1, 2026

<b>4.2 Industry Engagement Plan</b> in place to support connections between career development and college work.		
Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance that there will be industry engagement for Initial Designation.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Industry engagement plan included as part of career development plan with plans for specific partners outlined.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent implementation of coordinated career exploration and development as evidenced by Annual Reports; PPR DPR reports, Student Surveys</li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated Career Development Plan that includes evidence of industry engagement and opportunities.</li> </ul>

Guiding Principle 5: Effective Partnerships

<b>5.1. Partnership and Leadership Plan</b> that provides the shared vision for Early College and the value proposition for each partner, with a robust and cohesive approach to leadership and coordination that includes decision makers and program implementers at all institutions.		
Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assurance of partnership commitment and leadership capacity and readiness to actively engage.</li> <li>Assurance of preliminary rationale for partnership configuration.</li> <li>Assurance of preliminary staffing and leadership plan.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vision Statement</li> <li>Rationale for partnership configuration aligned to specific program needs.</li> <li>Staffing plan that demonstrates ample investment to deliver on the program.</li> <li>Leadership plan that shows robust engagement and collaboration between partners.</li> <li>Communication and coordination plan that demonstrates how decision makers and implementers across institutions work together.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key partnership and leadership strategies implemented over time as evidenced by Annual Reports; PPR and DPR reports and annual data outcomes.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewed Vision statement.</li> <li>Updated partnership, staffing and/or leadership plans as is relevant with rationale for how the approach sustains or improves outcomes.</li> </ul>

<b>5.2 Commitment to Program Sustainability:</b> A clear and cohesive approach to program sustainability, including shared agreements and resource allocation that define and enable the partnership, and systems and structures that integrate the program into each institution long term.
Indicators and Evidence

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to develop a comprehensive MOU to support Initial Designation.</li> <li>• Assurance of long-term commitment to the partnership.</li> <li>• Assurance of initial engagement with collective bargaining if applicable.</li> <li>• Commitment to develop a preliminary transportation plan for EC students to attend events, advising, and college coursework at the IHE.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Program Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOU that outlines shared program ownership and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Outline highlighting the shared partnership systems and structures for sustainability.</li> <li>• Partnership budget.</li> <li>• Clear logistics and transportation plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent and accurate implementation of MOU and plans as evidenced by Annual Reports; PPR and DPR reports and annual data outcomes.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b> Updated documents and plans that address the specific program challenges identified during Initial Designation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current, renewed MOU.</li> <li>• Updated communication and coordination plan.</li> <li>• Long term staffing plan.</li> <li>• Updated leadership succession plan.</li> <li>• Updated partnership budget.</li> </ul>

**5.3 Program Evaluation plan** that includes program goals and annual benchmarks to reach each of the established statewide indicators and outcomes for Designation Criteria under each phase of Designation.

Indicators and Evidence		
Planning Phase	Initial Designation	Full Designation
<p><b><i>In Commitment to Program Design:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to develop an EC Program Evaluation Plan with annual targets to move from Initial Designation phase to Full Designation.</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>In Design Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Program Evaluation Plan that outlines 5-year goals and benchmarks aligned to statewide outcomes that meet requirements of Full Designation</li> <li>• Progress tracking systems and strategies, and implementation roles and responsibilities for the Evaluation Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successfully meeting annual benchmarks aligned to Program Evaluation Plan as evidenced by Annual Reports, PPR and DPR reports and annual statewide data.</li> <li>• Statewide data demonstrates meeting college enrollment, persistence and degree attainment over time:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demonstrated increase in immediate college enrollment rates</li> <li>○ The majority of EC matriculators persist from prior year to second year of college.</li> <li>○ Demonstrated progress in college degree completion rate with a</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

TRANSITIONING TO FULL DESIGNATION - HANDOUT for 2018 PROGRAMS

Revised May 1, 2026

		<p>majority of EC graduates who enroll in post-secondary earning a degree within 6 years.</p> <p><b><i>In Full Designation Plan:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A sustainability plan with demonstrated leadership commitment and capacity.</li><li>• Updated long-term Program Evaluation Plan with benchmarks aligned to state goals.</li></ul>
--	--	--