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NEW MEXICO EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOLS: The High School Perspective

by Metiri Group and NS4ed

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Introduction: A 2016 Study on Early College High Schools in NM

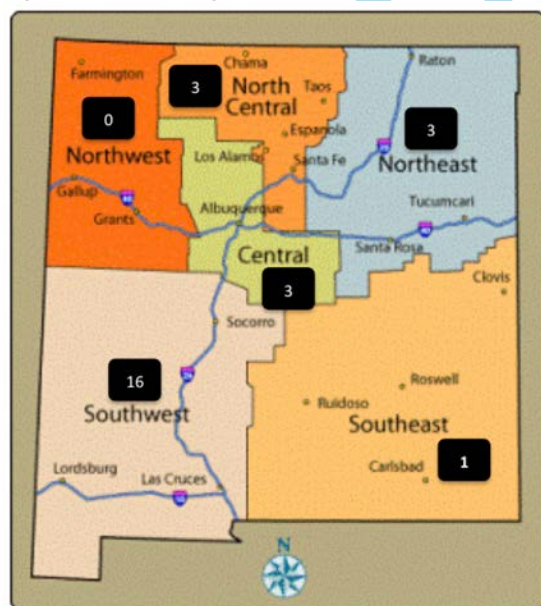
The Early College High Schools (ECHSs) in New Mexico are designed to propel students toward high school graduation while simultaneously earning college credit toward career certifications and two-year degrees. Models vary, but typically students start the acceleration in grades 9 and 10 by completing a significant percentage of their high school course requirements for graduation. Then, in grades 11 and 12, they attend a local community college, college, or university to earn a 2-year degree or workforce credential prior to their high school graduation. Currently there are 21 self-identified ECHSs in New Mexico (see list in Appendix A). The formal definition of an ECHS is listed in Appendix B.

In 2016, the New Mexico Department of Public Instruction commissioned a study to document the current needs of ECHS programs and the nature of the ECHS models that had evolved in the state. Survey data were collected from three respondent groups in New Mexico: K-12 school districts, colleges and universities, and businesses and community organizations.

The High School Perspective

This report represents the high school component from this 2016-17 study documenting the perspectives of high school respondents as well as Early College High School respondents. A survey was conducted late 2016, early 2017. While the focus was early college high schools, other high schools interested in the ECHS program were asked to participate as well. The survey had four sections: vision and purpose to be completed by all respondents, an ECHS section only to be completed by a school administrator, a teacher section to be completed by ECHS teachers, and a guidance counselor section to be completed by ECHS guidance counselors.

Figure 1. Count of high school respondents in each region of the state.

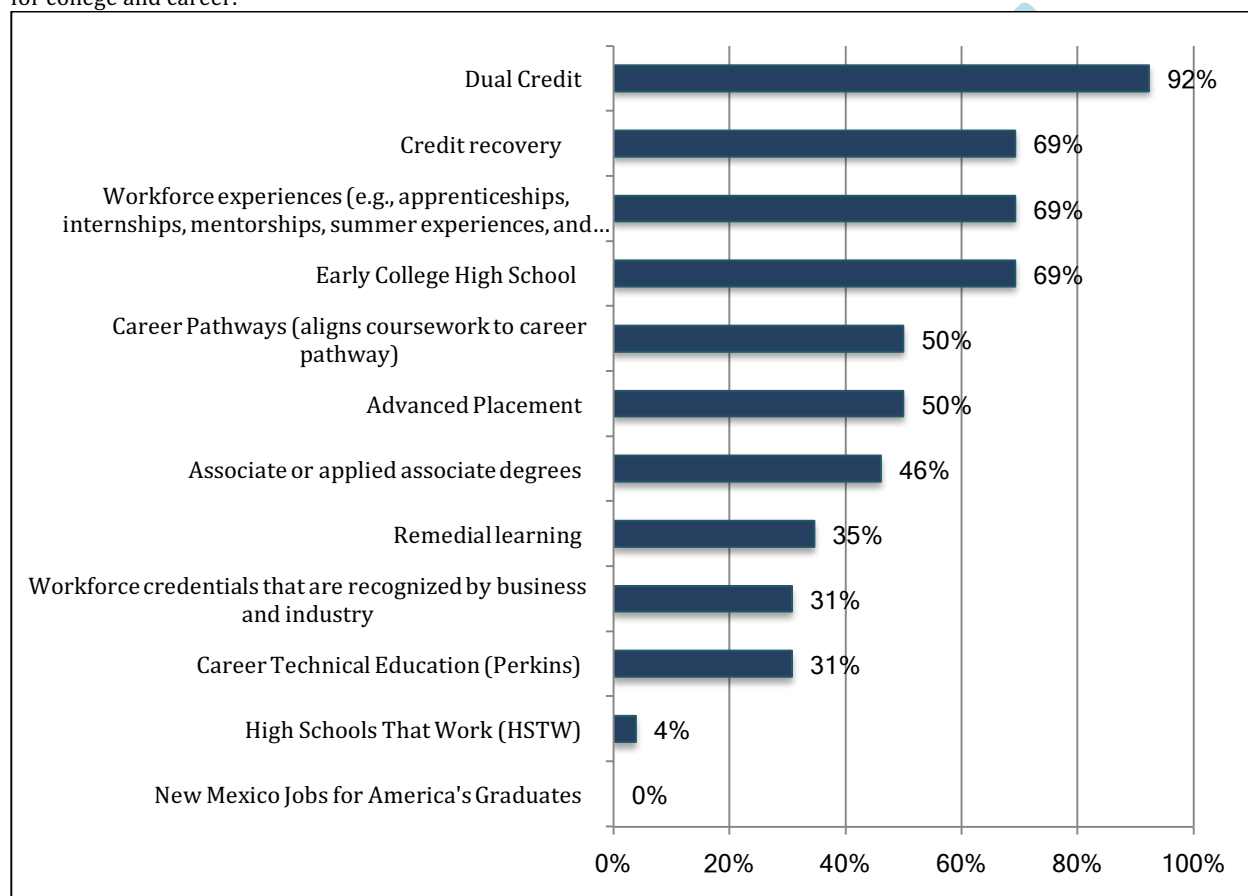


Recruitment was accomplished through email invitations sent to all Early College High school principals and to those high school administrators that requested additional information on an earlier survey conducted in early fall 2016. The principals were asked to participate and to invite their teachers and guidance counselors to participate. Survey results represent 57 respondents (25 school administrators, 19 teachers, 7 guidance counselors, 6 other). Those 57 work in 27 unique schools, 14 of which are Early College High schools. The geographic distribution of survey respondents is represented in Figure 1.

General Section

This section of the survey was completed by all 57 respondents. The count of 57 respondents, includes 22 school administrators or principals, 3 district administrators, 19 teachers, 7 guidance counselors and 6 others (i.e., college liaisons, dean of students, program specialists, director). The 57 respondents represent 25 unique high schools. Of the 25, fourteen (14) are Early College High schools seven (7) are charter schools.

Figure 2. The percentage of administrators indicating that their school offers the following accelerated school programs for college and career.



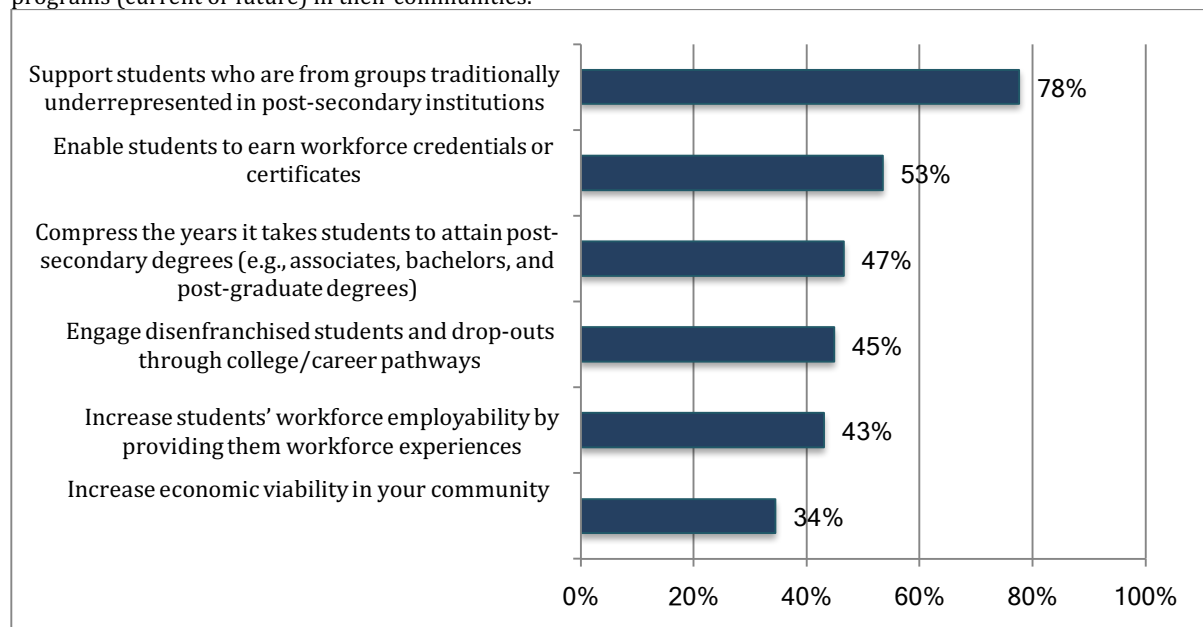
n=25 administrators (Only administrators were asked this question.)

Note: The administrators were asked to check all that apply, so percentages will not add up to 100%.

The Goal of the ECHS from the High School Perspective

The Early College High School program may use a number of the accelerated strategies listed above. When queried about what the 57 respondents considered the key goals for an ECHS, one goal far outranked the others, to “support students who are from groups traditionally underrepresented in post-secondary institutions (e.g., minorities, first generation college students, students who speak English as Second Language). That goal was included in 78% of the respondents’ top three rankings. Next on respondents’ lists was the goal to “enable students to earn workforce credentials or certificates” (53% included it in their top 3). See the full list in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The percentage of respondents who included the following in their top three priority goals for the ECHS programs (current or future) in their communities.

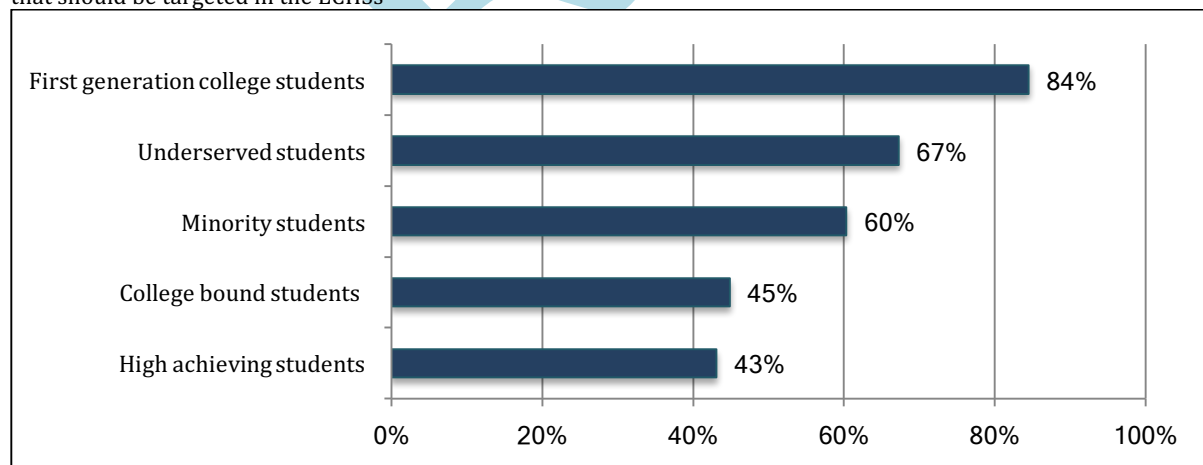


n=57

Student Groups to Be Targeted in ECHSs

The key target population for the ECHS that respondents included in their top three rankings was first generation college students. Over two-thirds of them also included underserved students and minority students in their top three. See Figure 4 for all rankings.

Figure 4. The percentage of respondents that included the following in their top three rankings for the students groups that should be targeted in the ECHSs



n=57

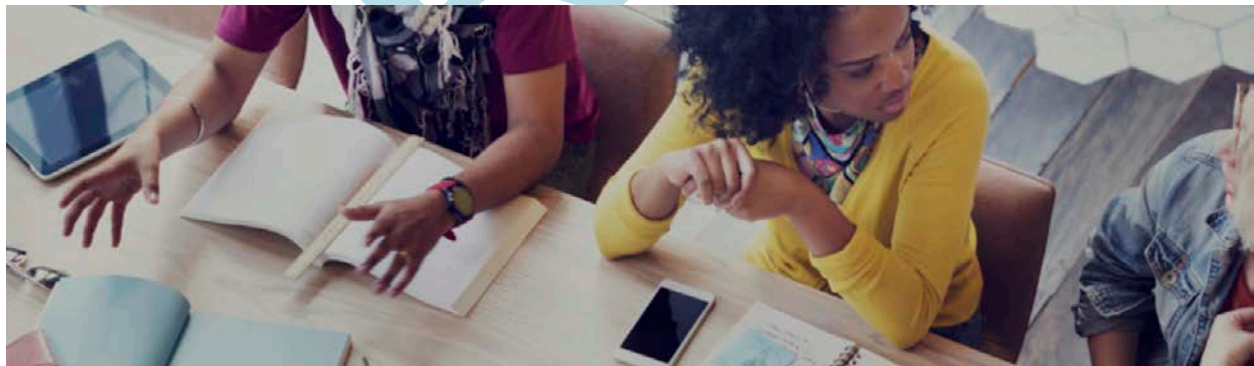
Respondents added comments about the target population for the ECHS programs, focusing on economically underserved students who are not served well in traditional neighborhood school. One respondent also noted that “In order for a student to be successful in this model, they have to have the desire to push through the rigor of a challenging academic pace and schedule.”

Profile of the Early College High Schools

While the states estimates that there may be as many as 24 Early College High Schools in New Mexico, 14 participated in this survey. Of the 14, five are charter schools, 8 are public high schools, and 1 is an APS Magnet School of Choice. This section is based on the responses of a principal or school administrator from each of the 14 Early College High schools, plus 18 teachers, and 7 guidance counselors. The 14 ECHSs are listed below.

Table 1. The Early College High Schools represented in this section.

Early College High School	District	City	Year ECHS was Established
Carlsbad Early College High School	Carlsbad Municipal Schools	Carlsbad	2014-2015
College and Career High School	Albuquerque Public Schools	Albuquerque	2014-2015
Early College Academy	Albuquerque Public Schools	Albuquerque	2005-2006
Early College High School	Las Cruces Public Schools	Las Cruces	2010-2011
East Mountain High School	Sandi Park	Sandia Park	
Middle College High	Middle College High	Gallup	2002-2003
Penasco High	Penasco Independent Schools	Penasco	2009-2010
Rio Grande Preparatory Institute	Las Cruces Public Schools	Mesilla	2013-2014
Robertson High	Las Vegas City Schools	Las Vegas	2014-2015
San Juan College High School	Farmington Municipal Schools	Farmington	2016-2017
Taos Academy	Taos Academy	Taos	2009-2010
The Master Program	The Master Program	Santa Fe	2010-2011
University High	Roswell Independent Schools	Roswell	2014-2015
Walatowa Charter High	Walatowa High Charter Schools	Jemez Pueblo	2009-2010

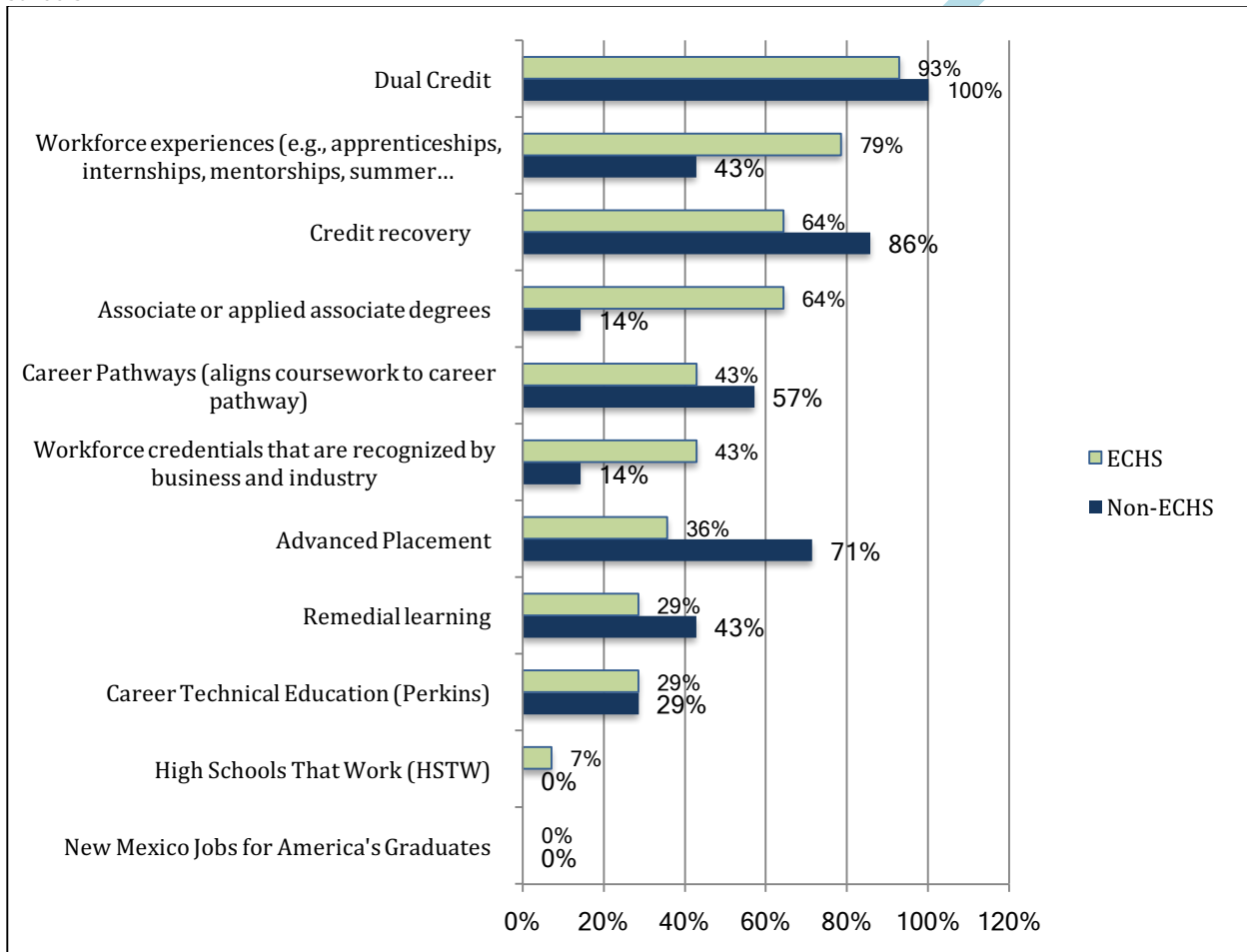


Accelerated programs in the ECHS

The percentage of the ECHSs with the following accelerated programs currently underway is displayed below (see Figure 5). While not truly a comparison with other schools across New Mexico, the responses of the ECHS administrators (14 schools), in comparison to non-ECHS respondents (7 schools) were significant on several fronts.

- The ECHS programs were significantly more likely to have:
 - Workforce experiences (79% for ECHS vs. 43% for non-ECHS).
 - Associate or applied associates degrees (64% for ECHS vs. 14% for non-ECHS).
 - Workforce credentials (43% for ECHS vs. 14% for non-ECHS).
- The ECHS programs were significantly less likely to have:
 - Credit recovery (64% for ECHS vs. 86% for non-ECHS).
 - Advanced Placement (36% for ECHS vs. 71% for non-ECHS).
 - Remedial learning (29% for ECHS vs. 43% for non-ECHS).

Figure 5. Percentage of all respondents and ECHS administrators: accelerated programs currently underway in their schools.

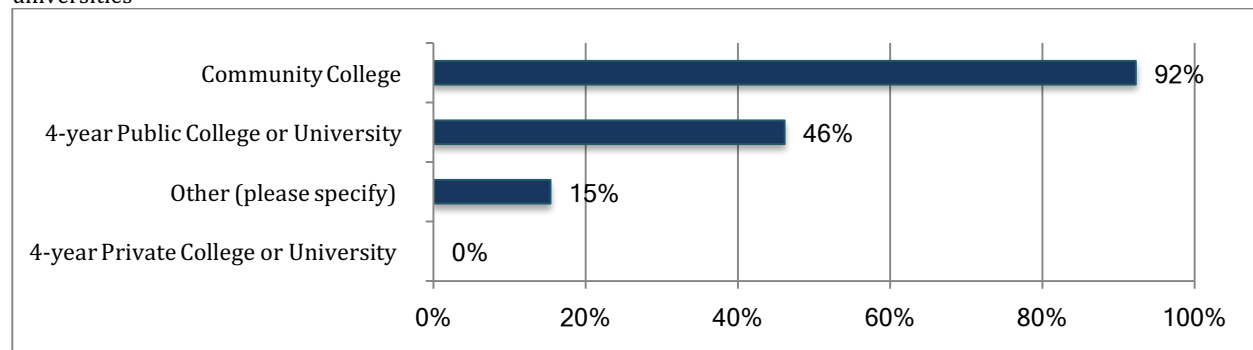


n = 14 ECHS administrators; and 7 non-ECHS respondents (representing 7 non-ECHS high schools)

College and University Partners

By far, the community colleges are most often the ECHS higher education partners. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the ECHS administrators reported a partnership with a community college. With many reporting partnerships with more than one college or university, 46% of those administrators reported partnerships with a 4-year public higher education institution. See Figure 6. The percentage of the ECHS administrators who report partnerships with these types of colleges and universities

Figure 6. The percentage of the ECHS administrators who report partnerships with these types of colleges and universities



n=13

Note: The administrators checked all that applied, so the percentages will not sum to 100%.

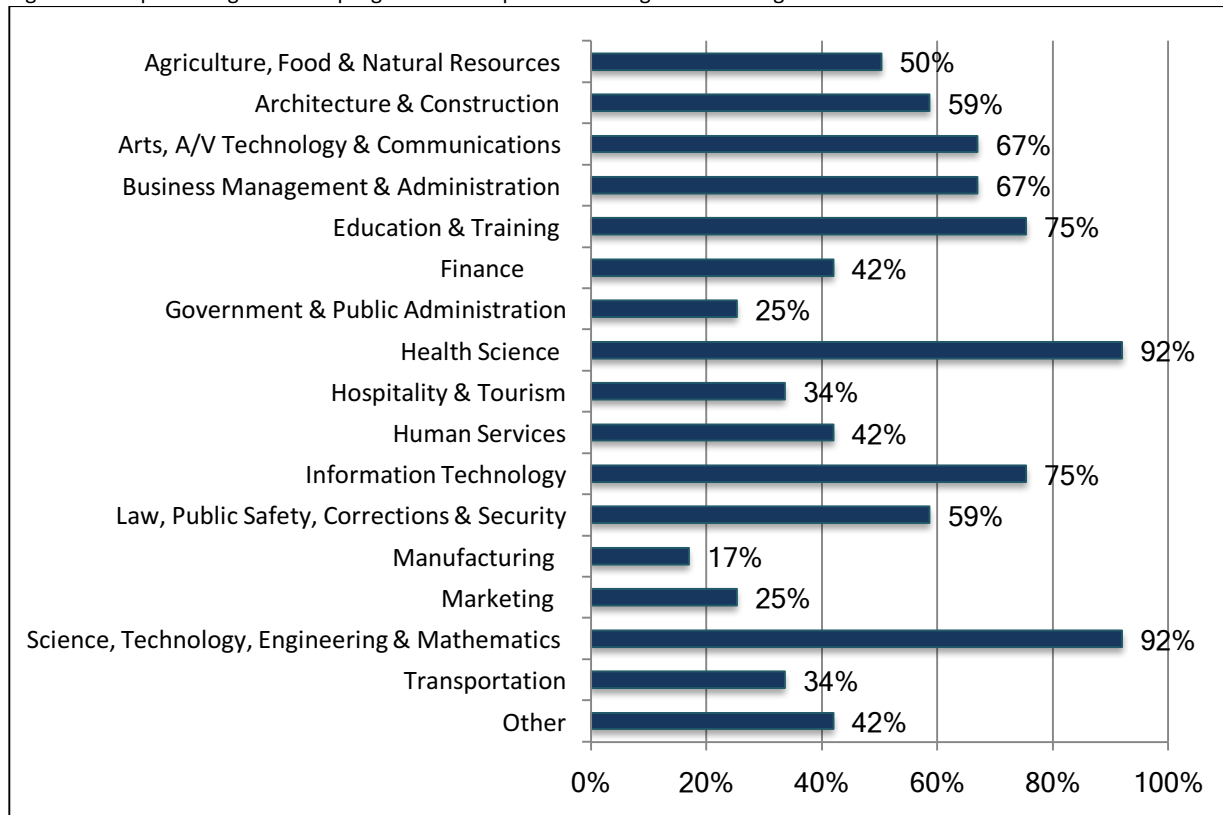
The ECHSs that responded to this survey are listed below with their college/university partners.

School and District	College/University Partner
Carlsbad Early College High School, Carlsbad Municipal Schools	New Mexico State University - Carlsbad
College and Career High School, Albuquerque Public Schools	Central New Mexico Community College, University of New Mexico.
Early College Academy, Albuquerque Public Schools	CNM, UNM, IAIA
Early College High School, Las Cruces Public Schools	DACC and NMSU
Middle College High, Gallup-McKinley City Schools	University of New Mexico-Gallup Navajo Technical University
Penasco High, Penasco Independent Schools	Northern New Mexico College
Rio Grande Preparatory School, Las Cruces Public Schools	DACC and NMSU
Robertson High, Las Vegas City Public Schools	New Mexico Highlands University and Luna Community College
San Juan College High School, Farmington School District	San Juan College
Taos Academy, Taos Academy	UNM Taos
The Master Program, The Master Program	Santa Fe Community College
University High, Roswell Independent Schools	Eastern New Mexico University, Eastern New Mexico University- Roswell
Walatowa Charter High, Walatowa Charter High	Institute of American Indian Arts and Central New Mexico College

ECHS Career Clusters

The ECHSs offer a number of career clusters through their partner colleges/universities. The top two offered by 92% of the ECHSs were Health Sciences, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

Figure 7. The percentage of ECHS programs that reported offering the following career clusters

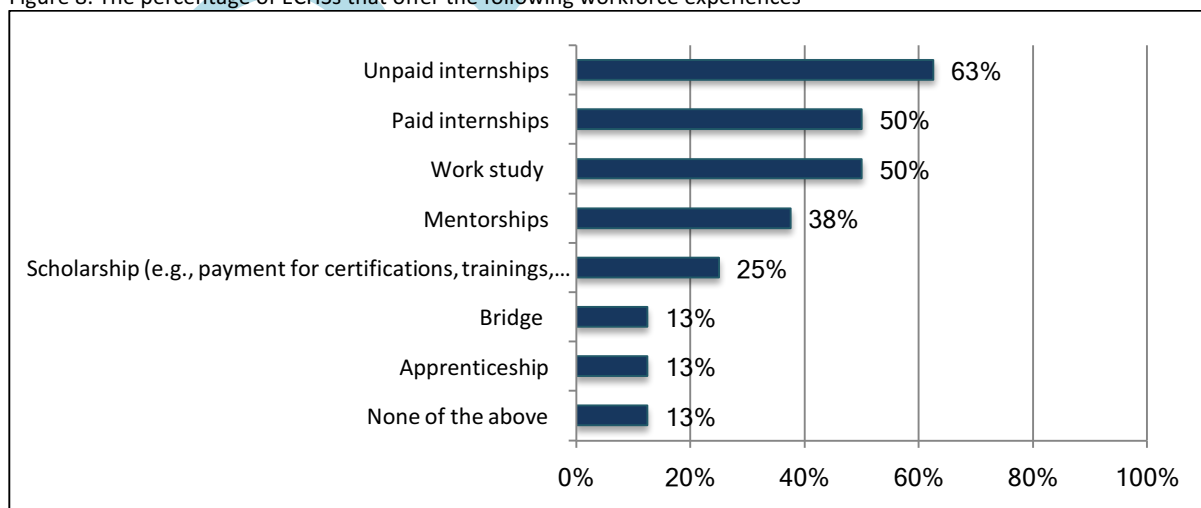


n = 12

Respondents selected all that applied.

The ECHSs offer a number of workforce experiences through their business and community partners. Sixty-three percent (63%) of ECHSs offer unpaid internships and 50% offer paid internships and work study experiences. Thirty-eight percent (38%) offer mentorships, 25% offer scholarships, and 13% offer bridge experiences, and apprenticeships, with 13% indicating that they offer none of those mentioned.

Figure 8. The percentage of ECHSs that offer the following workforce experiences

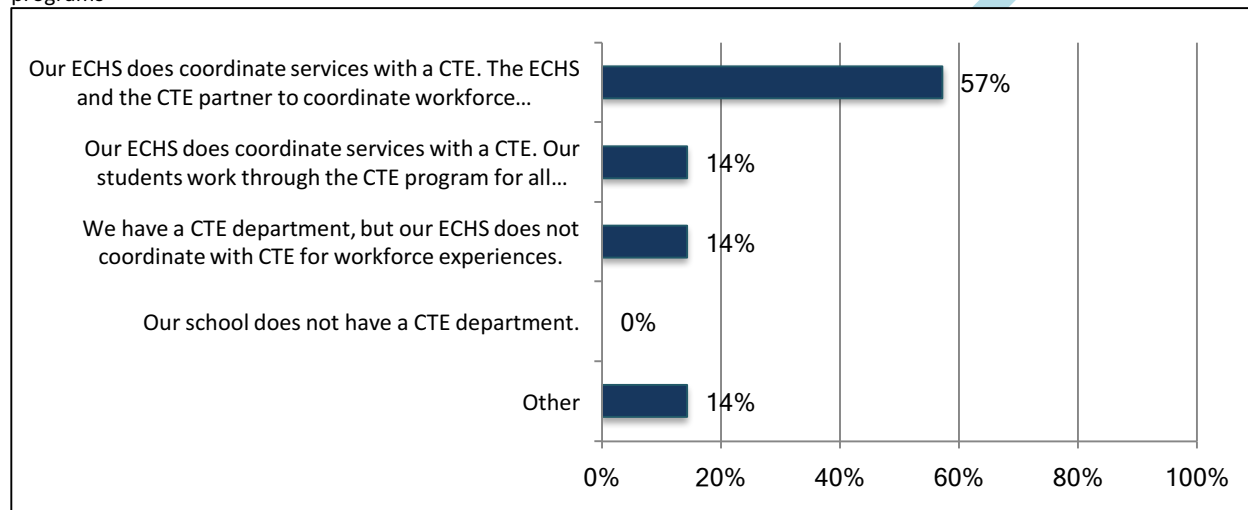


n=8

Nearly 75% of the ECHSs said they provided moderate to strong support to their business and community partners in ways that explicitly prepare them to work successfully with high school students. Twenty-seven percent of ECHSs said they offered minimal support and one commented that their ECHS “uses a district work-based learning program that provides mentorship training to jobsite facilitators.”

Most high schools receive federal funds to support a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. Near three-quarters (71%) of the ECHSs reported that they did coordinate with a CTE program, and in some cases (14%) they coordinate services through the CTE. See

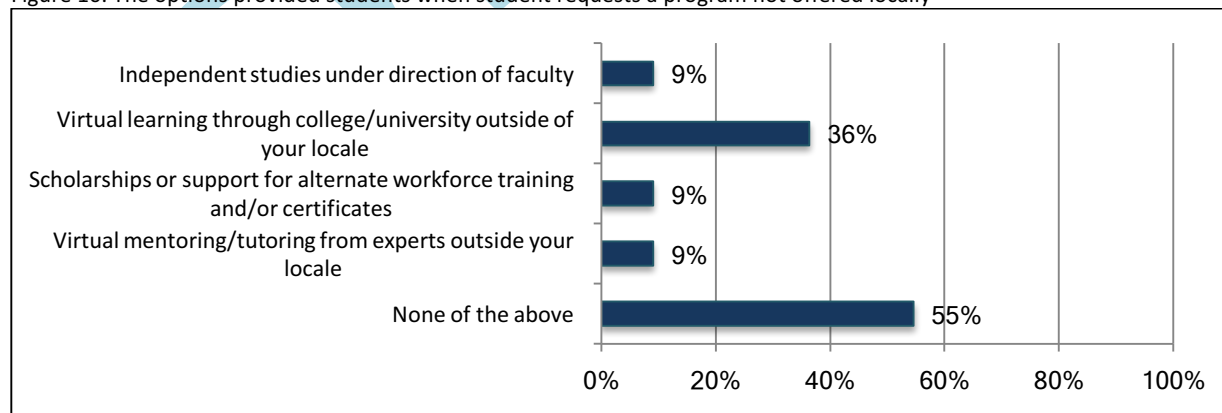
Figure 9. The percentage of ECHSs that reported the following levels of coordination with their Career and Technical Education programs



n = 12

When students sought to study a career cluster not available locally, some alternatives are through the ECHSs. Nine percent (9%) of the ECHSs offered independent studies, 36% offered virtual learning, 9% offered scholarships or support for alternative workforce training, and 9% offered virtual mentoring/tutoring.

Figure 10. The options provided students when student requests a program not offered locally

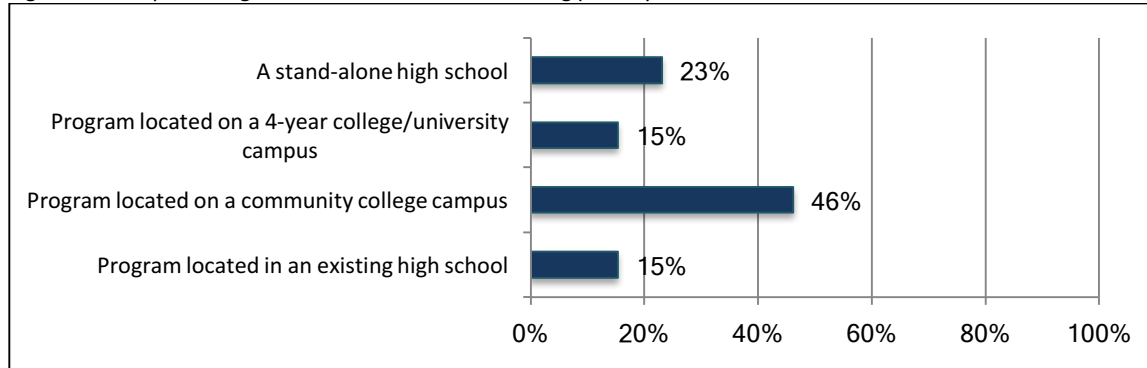


n = 12

Location of the ECHS programs

The location of the ECHS varies considerably across programs. While 23% of the ECHSs are located in a stand-alone high school, 15% are located on a 4-year college/university campus, 46% are located on a community college campus, and 15% are located in an existing high school (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. The percentage of ECHSs that use the following primary locations.

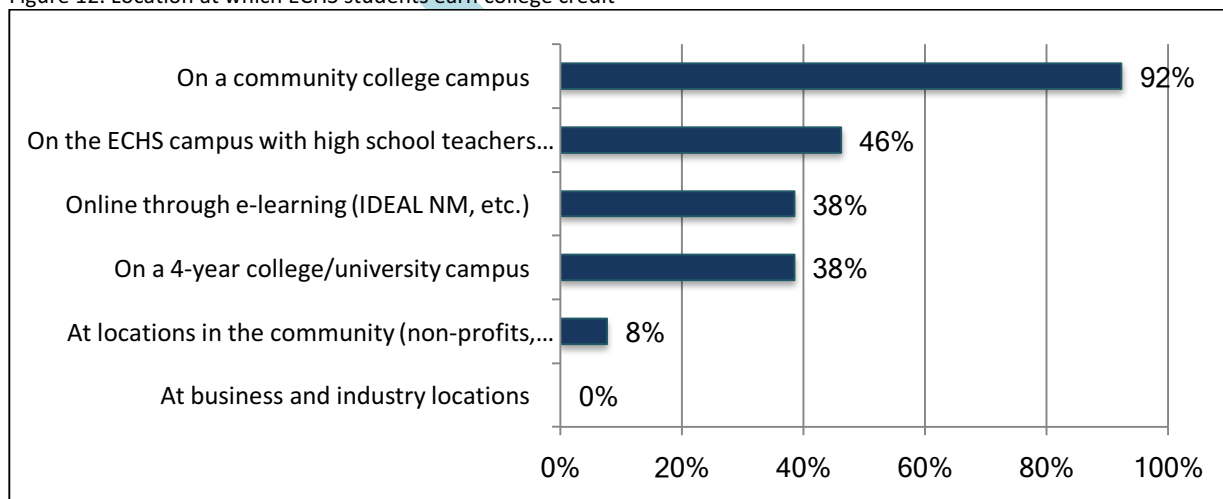


n=13

Location at which students earn credits

Ninety-two percent (92%) of the ECHSs provide opportunities for their students to earn college credit on a community college campus. Nearly half of the ECHSs (46%) enable their students to earn college credit through classes offered on the ECHS campus. Thirty-eight percent (38%) offer their students college credits online or on a four-year college/university campus, and 8% offer college credit at locations in the community. At this time, none of the ECHSs offer college credit to students at business locations. See Figure 12. The respondents indicated that locations worked well for students, but that college campuses at a distance from the ECHS presented some challenges and that the online courses could use more structure to keep students paced appropriately.

Figure 12. Location at which ECHS students earn college credit



n=13

Note: The respondents had the option of choosing all options that applied.

At grades 11-12, 93% of the ECHS identified a community or 4-year college campus as the primary location for their students to earn college credit, with 62% identifying the ECHS campus as the secondary location. For grade 9-10 students, options were more varied. The primary location identified by 53% of the ECHSs was a community or 4-year college campus, with 36% reporting the primary location as the ECHS campus, and 9% identifying that primary location as online.

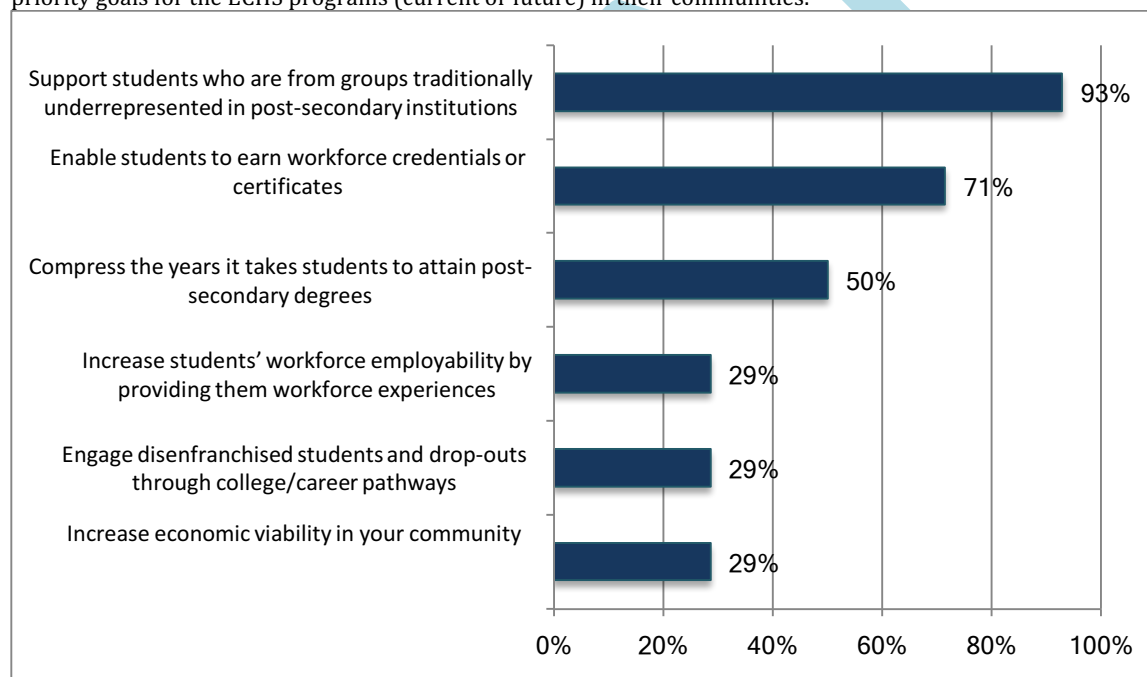
Rigor of ECHS Courses for College Credit

When asked about the ECHS courses for college credit, 83% of the ECHS principals/school administrators reported that they were more rigorous and complex than the regular high school courses. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the ECHS principals/school administrators said that the ECHS courses for college credit generally required more effort and commitment on the part of the student.

Goals for the ECHS programs

The top three priority goals for the ECHS administrators were to: “support students who are from groups traditionally underrepresented in post-secondary institutions (e.g., minorities, first generation college students, students who speak English as Second Language), and to “enable students to earn workforce credentials or certificates.” See the full list in Figure 13.

Figure 13. The percentage of ECHS administrators and all 57 respondents who included the following in their top three priority goals for the ECHS programs (current or future) in their communities.

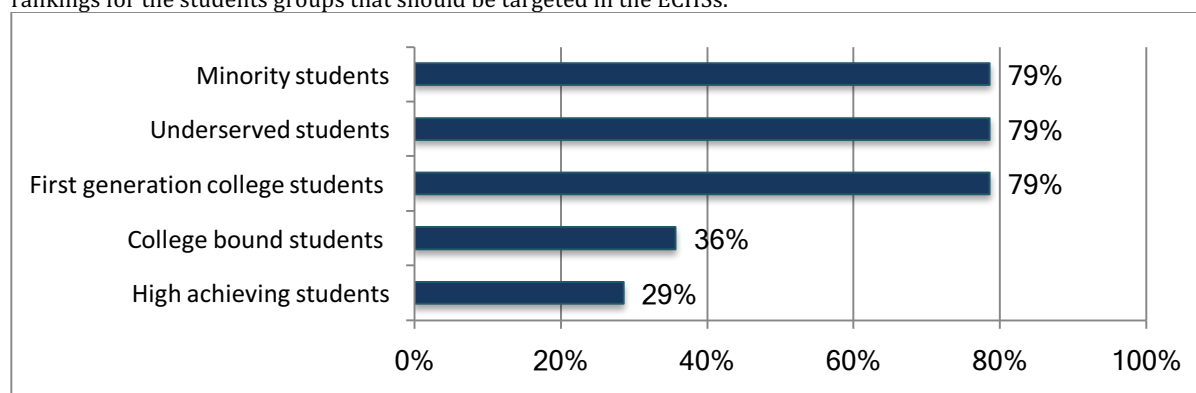


n=14

Targeted Audience for ECHSs

The ECHS administrators indicated that the three student groups they thought would benefit the most from the ECHS are the first generation college students, underserved students, and minority students. Figure 14 shows the similar rankings.

Figure 14. The percentage of ECHS administrators and all 57 respondents that included the following in their top three rankings for the students groups that should be targeted in the ECHSs.



n=14

ECHS Enrollments/ Graduates

The ECHS grade levels served varies across the respondent ECHSs. The grades served, number of schools in that category, and the name of the schools are included in

Table 2.

The number of 2016 graduates is also listed below along with the percentage of students that are traditionally underserved. While six (6) schools report graduation rates of 90% or above, others range from 42% to 88%.

Table 2. The grade levels served by each school; school enrollment, plus percent of student who are underserved, and the number of graduates.

Grades served	No. of Schools	Schools	School Enrollment	Percent Underserved	2016 Graduates
Grade 9 only	1	San Juan College High School, Farmington School District	80	65%	0
Grades 9-11	2	Carlsbad Early College High School, Carlsbad Municipal Schools	180	75%	1
		University High, Roswell Independent Schools	115	85%	1
Grades 9-12	5	Early College Academy, Albuquerque Public Schools	204	58%	10
		Early College High School, Las Cruces Public Schools	464	75%	102
		Penasco High, Penasco Independent Schools	30	100%	13
		Rio Grande Preparatory School, Las Cruces Public Schools	350	100%	164
		Walatowa Charter High, Walatowa Charter High	58	97%	11
Grads 10-12	4	College and Career High School, Albuquerque Public Schools	142	100%	52
		Middle College High, Gallup-McKinley City Schools	100	67%	41
		Taos Academy, Taos Academy	58	62%	14
		The Master Program, The Master Program	200	73%	49
Grades 11-12	1	Robertson High, Las Vegas City Public Schools	450	70%	84

Note: No data for East Mountain.

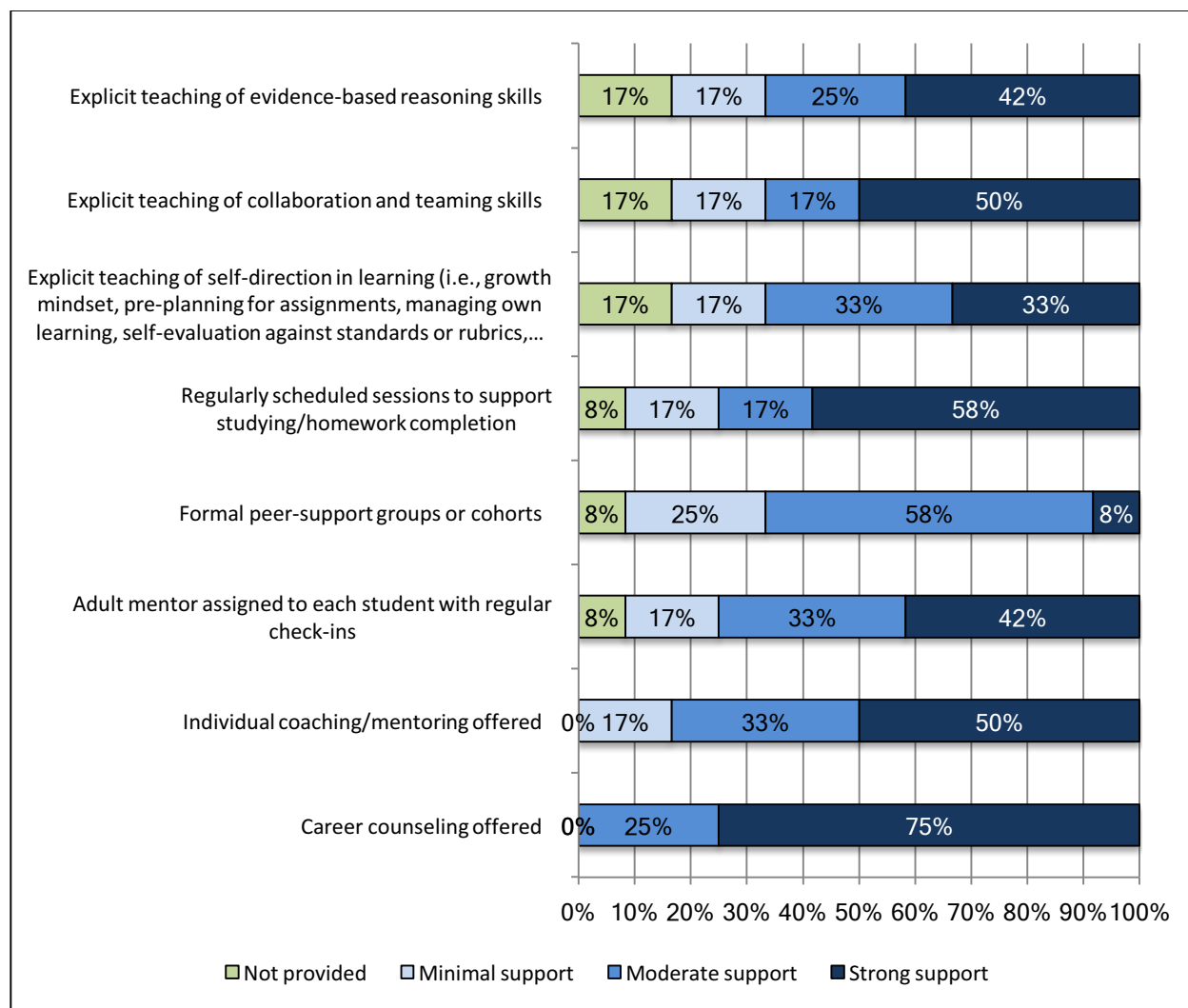
Overall, 531 students graduated from the 13 ECHS schools represented in this study. The data from the ECHSs indicate that 40% of ECHS graduates earned their associates degree, 46% earned the equivalent of 2 years in college, 26% earned a workforce credential, 23% graduated to attend a community college, 67% went on to a 4-year degree, and 11% joined the workforce in a job. (Note: the percentages in this paragraph are based on the 11 ECHS that reported these percentages.)

Supports offered ECHS students and their parents

The ECHSs offered significant support systems for their students. When asked about the level of support, 75% of the ECHS said they provided strong support through career counseling. Fifty-eight percent (58%) offered strong support for regularly scheduled session for studying/homework completion. Fifty percent (50)% offered strong support for the explicit teaching of collaboration and teaming skills, and individual coaching/mentoring. See Figure 15.

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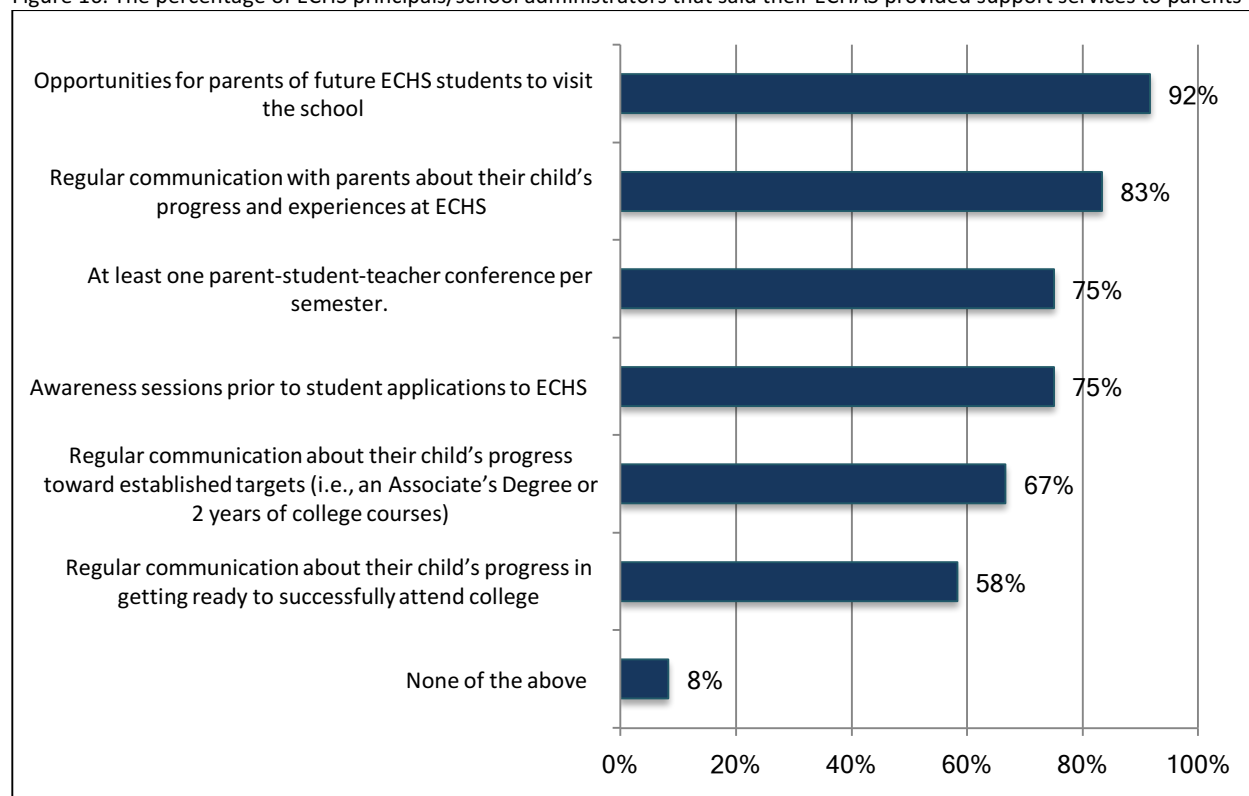
Figure 15. The percentage of ECHS principals/school administrators who reported offering the following student supports



n = 12

The supports provided for parents included services both prior to the student entering the ECHS and subsequent to the students' enrollment. The services prior included opportunities to visit (92% of the ECHSs), and awareness sessions (82% of ECHSs). The services offered once the student was enrolled, included: regular communication (83% of ECHSs), parent-student-teacher conferences (75% of ECHSs), and regular communication about the student's progress toward established targets (67% of ECHSs). See Figure 16 for a full list of supports.

Figure 16. The percentage of ECHS principals/school administrators that said their ECHAS provided support services to parents



n = 12

The Timing and Impetus for establishing the ECHSs

The first of the 14 ECHSs represented here, was established in 2002-03. The second was launched in 2005-06. Five more were established from 2009-2011 and an additional five in 2013-15. The more recent was in 2016-17. The Daniels Foundation, in partnership with the New Mexico Public Education Department, has been instrumental in seeding a number of the ECHSs in New Mexico.

The needs in the communities that prompted the districts to establish the 14 ECHSs represented here painted a picture of low graduation rates, the need to find alternatives that work for disenfranchised students, and to help them realize that college is an option for them. In addition, the communities said they needed to attract new industry to the area, but lacked skilled workers. Respondents also mentioned a reduction in college enrollments due to financial challenges for students.

Table 3. The ECHSs' established needs that launched their ECHS.

Category	Needs that served as the impetus for the ECHSs
Lack of options for disenfranchised and first generation students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of viable options, particularly for students who were disenfranchised with traditional public education and its lack of opportunities. ▪ Data showing ECHS supports success for first generation students. ▪ The alternative setting - focus was on students not doing well in traditional settings but still pursuing goals, degrees and trades. ▪ To meet the needs of students who wanted to take college classes and core classes simultaneously in the same location. • We are a rural school with limited resources and number of staff. By sending students to a neighboring college, they were able to take courses that that we couldn't offer. It also allowed our students to acquire college credits while completing high school credits.
Need attract new industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of a trained work force in the community to attract new industry. ▪ Lack of skilled workforce. ▪ Need for college and career ready graduates change in workforce needs increased need for workers with some type of post secondary credentials build basic skills improve high school instruction increase graduation rates increase college entry provide crucial supports to help college students job trainees advance toward credentials with high labor market value ▪ Unqualified workforce / industry concern
Low graduation rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low Graduation rates. ▪ Low on-time graduation rates.
Low college enrollments in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in College enrollment due to lack of financial abilities
Lack of awareness of college options among students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rural, disadvantaged students need support to know they too can attend college. Many of our students are first generation, high poverty and minority.

Recruitment

Some of the challenges identified by ECHS administrators in an early section were community perceptions and recruitment. The respondent ECHS administrators provided short descriptors of their recruitment processes. They range from advertising in newspapers, radio, newspapers, and social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat) and websites to in-person fairs, word of mouth, and presentations at middle schools and parents' nights. See Table 4.

Table 4. A listing of 13 ECHS respondent schools and short descriptors of their recruitment process.

School and District	Recruitment Process
Carlsbad Early College High School, Carlsbad Municipal Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Release application in January Publish article in the local paper Host parent and student meetings at the middle school Meet with parents and students individually
College and Career High School, Albuquerque Public Schools	We offer campus tours, work collaboratively with local media, our business advisory council, and our higher education partner to reach out to students. We attend the annual APS School Choice Fair, and work with the APS communications department to recruit and get word out about our school.
Early College Academy, Albuquerque Public Schools	We send out recruitment letters to all APS 8th grade students; we have a space at the School of Choice Fair; we recruit to all private and parochial schools; we drive people to our website; we have a social media presence through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat
Early College High School, Las Cruces Public Schools	Letter of advertisement to all eighth grade students in the district. Parent nights in all middle school locations. Information available to public in non-traditional settings such as Walmart.
Middle College High, Gallup-McKinley City Schools	Open lottery.

Penasco High, Penasco Independent Schools	Every student who has the grades and has the capacity to pass the entrance exam is strongly encouraged to participate.
Rio Grande Preparatory School, Las Cruces Public Schools	Word of Mouth - our focus is on the high school diploma but we want students to experience post secondary education
Robertson High, Las Vegas City Public Schools	Both post-secondary institutions make several presentations and visits to our high school.
San Juan College High School, Farmington School District	SJCHS staff travel to all SJC Middle schools, private schools to present information about ECHS systemic approach to education. We share all our school information (web page, face book and office contact info) to all current county 8th grade students. We run advertising in local SJC newspaper on application time frame and contact info. We offer 2 general public information nights open to all interested students and families. We utilize our current 9th grade students at information night for students to speak directly to them for questions about the program. We provide Spanish translators at information meetings. We have developed a power point presentation about the ECHS design and all information about applying. We spend Jan traveling and sharing information. We provide the 1 public information night in Jan before applications open up and 1 public meeting in Feb during open application time frame. Applications open Feb 1st and end Feb 28th. We conduct 15min family interviews with all applicants to answer questions for students and families before conducting a Lottery selection of applicants.
Taos Academy, Taos Academy	Students must meet criteria of college dual credit as well as receive a recommendation from 10th grade teachers. We start in 9th grade prepping students for this opportunity. Most of our students participate in the ECHS. We also have a tradition program.
The Master Program, The Master Program	Mostly word of mouth and ad in local newspaper.
University High, Roswell Independent Schools	Meetings at the local junior high schools in the spring. Advertising campaigns on local radio, TV, and Newspaper. Speaking rotation with local service organizations (rotary, etc.) Open House days through out the year and website on district site.
Walatowa Charter High, Walatowa Charter High	Online post or programs, community meetings, school grade report, middle school visitation to the Pueblo of Zia, Pueblo of Jemez and local community schools.

Admissions

The ECHS have each developed their own sets of admissions criteria. In some ECHSs eligibility is based on achieving a specific grade level, other use GPA, attendance, teacher recommendations, writing samples, progress toward graduation, credits earned to date, and test scores. For a list of the criteria for each school see Table 5.

Forty-six percent (46%) of the 13 ECHSs reported that they give priority to students who are traditionally underrepresented in colleges and universities. Another 23% checked “other” and added these specifics:

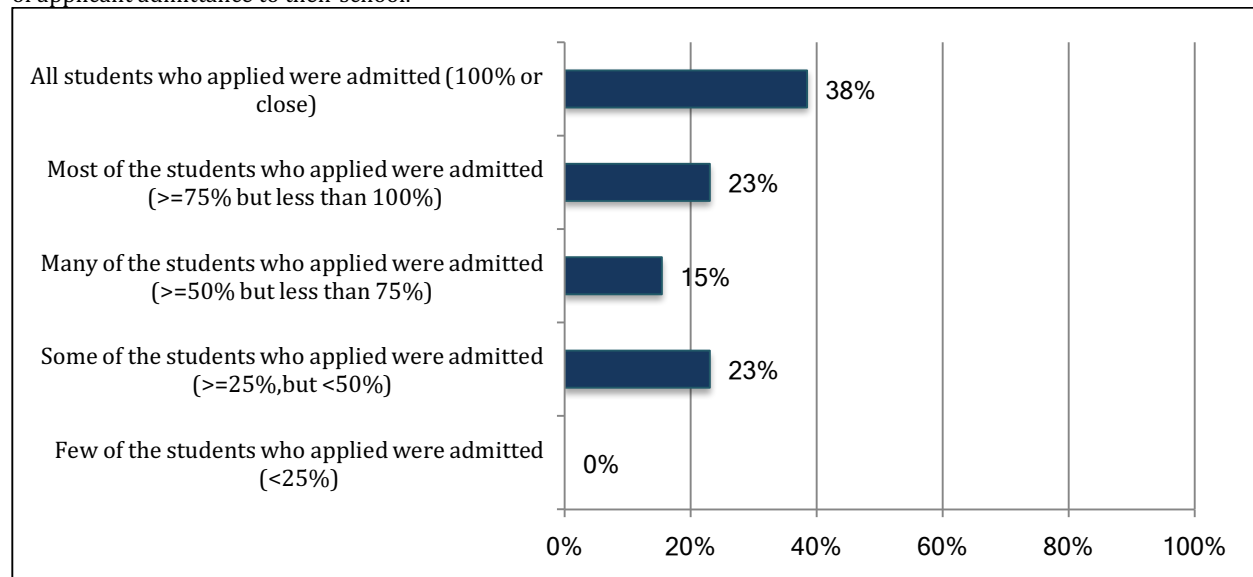
- It is encouraged for underrepresented to apply as the ECHS data shows success rate for them.
- Our process is open to any student and names are drawn through a lottery process.
- So far we do not need to cap the program past the requirements below. All students who meet criteria can participate.

Table 5. A listing of 13 ECHS respondent schools and short descriptors of their admissions criteria.

School and District	Admissions criteria
Carlsbad Early College High School, Carlsbad Municipal Schools	Criteria include: attendance, teacher recommendation, a writing sample, and an interview.
College and Career High School, Albuquerque Public Schools	Students need to be on track to graduate from high school. There is no GPA requirement.
Early College Academy, Albuquerque Public Schools	We do not have any specific criteria because we are a public school open to any incoming 9th graders. We do ask that students with IEPs have a conversation with us to make sure we can meet their needs. We are very limited with the supports we have because we are a small school.
Early College High School, Las Cruces Public Schools	Essay expressing desire to attend as part of their application, this includes interview with parents also expressing commitment to support student.
Middle College High, Gallup-McKinley City Schools	Open lottery. Must be a sophomore in high school.
Penasco High, Penasco Independent Schools	Must have a 2.5 high school GPA Their application has to be approved by the principal, counselor, program director based upon their attendance, behaviors, and grades. Students must be in tenth grade or above. Ninth grade gifted students are also eligible to attend.
Rio Grande Preparatory School, Las Cruces Public Schools	Students must want to earn a high school diploma - they must be willing to participate in a non-traditional setting. If we have room, we allow them into our school. Currently we have a waiting list.
Robertson High, Las Vegas City Public Schools	Juniors must have a 2.5 grade point average and seniors must have a 2.0 grade point average.
San Juan College High School, Farmington School District	Good attendance, Minimal discipline referrals, first generational (not required but encouraged), self motivated and enjoy learning.
Taos Academy, Taos Academy	Minimum 2.5 overall GPA, recommendation from 10th grade teachers, career pathways credit completed successfully in 10th grade
The Master Program, The Master Program	Must have earned 6 credits in 9th grade.
University High, Roswell Independent Schools	Copy of Middle school grades, testing scores, 3 teacher references, meeting with family and ECHS admission team and complete application.
Walatowa Charter High, Walatowa Charter High	All students complete enrollment packet. Next Step meetings are conducted to identify academic needs assessments. Asvab, accuplacer and reading plus assessments are conducted to identify growth areas.

When asked what percent of the students who apply to their ECHS get accepted, the answers ranged from 33% to 100%. More specifically, two schools accepted approximately one-third of student applicants, two schools accepted approximately 60% of applicants, one accepted 75% of its applicants, and four schools accepted 95% and above of its applicants. The table below provides a snapshot of

Figure 17. The percentage of the ECHS administrators who agreed that the following statement accurately described rates of applicant admittance to their school.



n=13

Strengths of the Current ECHS Model

The ECHS administrators identified a number of strengths of their current programs. Many mentioned the incredible value of their partner and stakeholder collaborations and contributions. They appreciated the access to the rigor of the higher education institutions, and their ECHS's support system that enables their students to succeed. Some of those supports include social-emotional learning, community building, variety of opportunity to succeed, career counseling, smaller class sizes with lower student-teacher ratios, and tutoring. They also noted the importance of the financial support and the strength in the diversity of their students. Table 6 lists the strengths as stated by the 14 ECHS principals/school administrators.

Table 6. The ECHSs' strengths as identified by the principals/school administrators

Category	
Access to the rigor of higher education courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigor of instruction relationship with post secondary partner • Access to higher education rigor for students to feel successful while also supported by their HS. • College and career readiness of our program and post secondary opportunities while in high school. • Two post-secondary institutions in the community • Variety of career pathways
Effective support system enabling students to succeed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We spend a lot of time working on social/emotional learning and community building so that every student feels known and seen and supported. We offer tutoring all day long because our curriculum is challenging and our standards high. The high school focuses on building skills and confidence and then we can start them at the college one course at a time to make sure they are ready. Our school grade and scores prove that this combination of demanding excellence with lots of love and support works. ▪ Guidance and preparation for career or college interests ▪ We focus on students who may have not started the four years of high school well. They need to recover and realize post-secondary is still a possibility. ▪ Focus is on College AND Career Readiness ▪ If students follow the plan each semester, they have the potential to graduate with a full AA. We have a college and career counselor who works very closely with our GEAR UP Coordinator. Our students have excellent support to make sure that they are successful high school and college students. ▪ Individualized advising and opportunities for concurrent and dual enrollment. ▪ teachers involved with HSTW consultants student out comes ▪ Smaller class sizes, more one on one attention, classes meet five days per week, students are provided lots of assistance in terms of tutoring and one on one instruction from teachers, emphasis on parent involvement with their child's education through meetings and trainings
Financial support for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help with first year credit to reduce costs. ▪ Financial support for AA program support services from district and college for student needs free/reduced meal program 1:1 Laptop technology
Stakeholder collaboration and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District and community support ▪ Business/Industry support and contributions ▪ Instructors and partnerships with colleges, PED Programs and tribal programs.
The ECHS model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lower student/teacher ratio ▪ We are on a college campus; students spend 50% of their day in the high school, and 50% of their day in the college.
The students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diversity of students

Significant Challenges the ECHSs Face

The challenges the ECHSs face are varied. The most often cited were financial sustainability and growth and potential changes in policies (e.g., dual credit, certification, teacher evaluation, and teacher qualifications) that impact the ECHS. Also mentioned were issues of community perception, recruitment of students into the program, the growth capacity of the college partners, and operational issues such as space, transportation, and scheduling. See

Table 7 for a full listing of challenges.

Table 7. The ECHSs' challenges the ECHSs face as identified by the principals/school administrators

Category	
Policy issues/changes at state and in partner organizations/institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential changes in dual credit rules. ▪ Superfluous rules from the Public and Higher Ed bureaucracies regarding all manner of things, such as proposed GPAs for dual enrollment eligibility and interference in schools' abilities to evaluate their own teachers (rather than adhering to a micro-managerial evaluation system that they have contracted with and are paying a fortune to implement). ▪ New HLC regulations impacting teacher qualifications. ▪ Working with our partner. Our students are older and we are still looking at credits and high school level for enrollment. Students may be 20 years old but they are turned away from enrollment in the dual credit because they are not juniors or seniors. Also if a student doesn't pass the entrance exam age is not considered. We are trying to get students attached to post secondary education but are at times placed into a traditional high school model. ▪ Secondary Education Teacher Licensure is narrow in scope - need teachers with multiple endorsement areas Higher Ed course offerings are becoming limited due to HLC requirements. i.e. no communications instructor causing limitation of course offerings in degree programs
Financial issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial support for Dual Credit Financial support in developing a new school for staff, curriculum, learning environment furniture and supplies. ▪ Financial support for PD for staff. ▪ Funding is diminishing and small size funding loss would be very difficult for us. We are successful because of our small classes, and as our economically disadvantaged and first generation student number increase every year, we need to maintain current levels to be successful. ▪ Budget. ▪ Potential loss of funding for both higher education and the school. ▪ Supporting students in funding their course fees, transportation.
Branding/Community perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community perception. • Jealousy from the local school district (which authorizes us, but wishes it did not have to do so).
Scope of offerings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of Sports, Band, activities
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Most of the students that participate are already college bound students, it is difficult to recruit students that don't intend on continuing their education. ▪ Enrollment
Growth capacity of college partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Post secondary capacity for our growing population without tuition funding
Operational issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The most significant challenges we face include getting a working schedule to accommodate our students in math and science classes. It has also been challenging to get classes offered during the time that we bus our students to the college. ▪ Transportation ▪ Physical Space

ECHS administrators' advice

The 14 ECHSs provided advice to others considering this new program for their communities.

Table 8. ECHS Administrators' advice to others considering this type of program

Category	Advice
Support	Build in lots of support of all kinds.
Program and operations	Keep classes small. Don't spread your resources too thin or try to teach in too many areas. Have a flexible schedule. Create a flexible schedule to support students. Physically spend time on campus of current schools.

	<p>Hire strong office staff that understand the design of the program.</p> <p>Hire strong instructional staff to deliver curriculum.</p>
Engage your teachers on the leadership team	<p>Hire teachers who want to be part of a team and collaborate with them at all levels.</p> <p>Share your leadership, trust your teaching staff,</p>
Build strong partnerships	<p>Reach out and network with current successful programs already established.</p> <p>Create a solid relationship with the college president and deans</p> <p>Develop a strong relationship with the post secondary partner and business community</p> <p>Establish a proactive relationship with your postsecondary partner(s).</p> <p>Work closely with higher education partner.</p> <p>Nurture your partnership with the higher education institution.</p> <p>Make sure you have a strong, collegial partnership with post-secondary institution.</p> <p>Partner with a post-secondary institution that will offer courses on your campus</p>
Sound policies and planning	<p>Have one year of planning before you launch.</p> <p>Establish policies and procedures before hand.</p> <p>Set clear policy</p>

Appendix A: List of ECHSs

Currently Early College High Schools are self-identified in the state of New Mexico. Table 9 represents those ECHSs that have had a principal or administrator complete the survey. Table 10 includes a list of those ECHSs in the state that did not have a principal or school administrator complete the survey and thus, is not represented in the report findings.

Table 9. The Early College High Schools represented in the report

District	Early College High School	City
Carlsbad Municipal Schools	Carlsbad Early College High School	Carlsbad
Albuquerque Public Schools	College and Career High School	Albuquerque
Albuquerque Public Schools	Early College Academy	Albuquerque
Las Cruces Public Schools	Early College High School	Las Cruces
Sandi Park	East Mountain High School	Sandia Park
Middle College High	Middle College High	Gallup
Penasco Independent Schools	Penasco High	Penasco
Las Cruces Public Schools	Rio Grande Preparatory Institute	Mesilla
Las Vegas City Schools	Robertson High	Las Vegas
Farmington Municipal Schools	San Juan College High School	Farmington
Taos Academy	Taos Academy	Taos
The Master Program	The Master Program	Santa Fe
Roswell Independent Schools	University High	Roswell
Walatowa High Charter Schools	Walatowa Charter High	Jemez Pueblo

Table 10. The Early College High Schools not represented in the report

District	Early College High School	City
Silver Consolidated Schools	Cliff High School	Cliff
Silver Consolidated Schools	Opportunity High School	Silver City
School of Dreams Academy	School of Dreams Academy	Los Lunas
Gadsden Independent School District	Alta Vista Early College High	Anthony
Hobbs Municipal Schools	Hobbs High School	Hobbs
Los Alamos Public Schools	Los Alamos High School	Los Alamos
Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools	Mesa Vista High School	Ojo Caliente
Raton	Raton Public Schools	Raton
Shiprock	Shiprock High School	Shiprock
Pojoaque Valley Public Schools	Pojoaque Valley Public Schools	Santa Fe

Appendix B: Draft Definition of Early College High School

The New Mexico DPE is in the process of formalizing a definition of an Early College High School (ECHS). Listed below is the current draft.

Draft of the PDE Definition of Early College High School (ECHS)

An Early College High School means a local educational agency in a partnership with at least one institution of higher education that:

- Allows participants to simultaneously complete requirements toward earning a regular high school diploma and to earn not less than 12 credits toward a college-level certificate, associate degree, or bachelor's degree at the partner institution of higher education.
- Ensures that Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are integrated into a structured program of study which meets local and state graduation requirements
- Provides a program of study toward a postsecondary credential or degree without tuition cost to the participant or the participant's family.
- Focuses on improving the academic achievement of low-achieving students and youth underrepresented in higher education by giving admissions preference to low-income students, such that the proportion of low income students in the student body is at least as high as that of the district in which the ECHS is located.
 - National School Lunch Program (NSLP) data shall be used as an indicator of poverty. Different combinations of available NSLP data may be used as a poverty measure for education program purposes. For example, NSLP data might include a combination of data from household applications (free and reduced price lunch forms) in addition to direct certification data available under the Community Eligibility Provision of the NSLP.
- Uses a lottery or other blind admission processes are used to ensure equitable access.
- Operates in partnership with local business and industry and leads to work readiness credentials
 - Programming includes meaningful work-based learning experiences
 - Career technical education courses use Common Career Technical Core Standards (CCTCS) to support core academic growth
- Accelerate participant learning beginning in ninth grade
 - Advanced Placement and dual credit courses are used to help high school students make a seamless transition into college.
 - Innovative, interactive, research-based support structures encourage positive outcomes for participants.