
VCS Memo

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Charles Glaes, Superintendent
DATE: December 2, 2014
RE: Early-Middle College (EMC)



At our December 8 School Board meeting, KRESA consultant Jim Murphy along with Keevin O'Neill will make a presentation to you on a new County initiative, Early-Middle College (EMC). EMC is an opportunity for Vicksburg (and all of Kalamazoo County) students to extend attendance through a 13th year and complete that grade with both a high school diploma and a Certificate/Associate's Degree paid for by the State per-pupil foundation allowance.

You may have seen a Gazette/Mlive article in the last week regarding EMC. In addition, Julie Mack is planning a large story for Sunday's Gazette on the opportunity featuring some photos of our Machine Tool students. (Machine Tool is one of the Certificate/Associate's programs available to County students, which will link local and [in some cases] EFE courses with KVCC coursework leading to the terminal Certificate or transferrable Associate's Degree.)

Keevin has been working closely with Jim Murphy to iron out the bugs and to custom-fit the program to our District. Enclosed you will find an overview of the program. Jim and Keevin will have more information for you Monday evening. Later on Monday's agenda, you will be asked to approve Vicksburg's participation. Please look over the attached, and feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Kalamazoo County Early Middle College Program Overview

The Early Middle College program is a brand new initiative in Kalamazoo County. Planning for this program started in January and the State of Michigan approved our application in July, 2014. The EMC program is designed to provide all students an opportunity to earn a high school diploma, an occupational or specific certificate/certificate of achievement, an occupational associate degree, or an associate degree which provides up to two years of post-secondary credit towards a bachelor degree. What makes the EMC model unique and different from other methods of obtaining college credit while still in high school is the EMC students are on a specific post-secondary program of study path and they have an additional 13th year for program completion.

In the initial phase of the program, there will be seven programs of study for students to choose from. These programs of study include:

- Associate of Arts – Liberal Arts (62-63 credit hours – transfer to WMU)
- Associate of Applied Science – Graphic Design (63-64 credit hours – terminal degree)
- Associate of Applied Science – Machine Tool Technology (62 credit hours – terminal degree)
- Graphic Design Certificate (30 credit hours – terminal degree)
- Machinist Certificate (32 credit hours – terminal degree)
- Certificate of Achievement – PC Support Technician (18 credit hours – terminal degree)
- Certificate of Achievement – Welding Technologies (10 credit hours – terminal degree)

As the program expands, additional programs of study will be developed with Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

The EMC model is structured so that students gradually increase their exposure to college courses over a five year span. Initially (9th grade) the bulk of the students' schedule will be comprised of traditional high school classes. As the student progresses through their educational plan, they will be exposed to more and more college courses and by the time they reach the 13th grade... all coursework will be on site at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Education for Employment and Education for the Arts classes have been incorporated into the EMC programs of study with KVCC and both will be an important partner as this initiative continues to develop.

Students who participate in the EMC also receive support services to assist them in their transition from high school to college. All EMC students will be required to take a College Success Strategies Course in 10th grade to enhance their academic preparation skills, study skill development and social maturity skills. They will also be involved in an EMC Seminar Series which will provide them an opportunity to further develop skills in areas such as academic behaviors and college survival techniques, and they will be assigned an EMC Mentor who will serve as a "coach" as they progress through the program.

The EMC program is an effective and efficient alternative to current college credit models that allows students the opportunity to earn up to 63 tuition free college credits while still in high school. Students will save both time and money as they pursue a post-secondary program, and they will also have access to support services designed to enhance their success as they work towards achieving their educational goals.