

## **School-Aged Mothers (SAM) program**

SAM is a program for school-aged mothers offered by TPSD. School-aged mothers will attend the Link Center for high school classes and special health education classes. The plan is for students to receive on-site child care, parenting education, and support services. The program is a partnership between TPSD and the Link Center.

SAM includes a regular academic program as well as a health program to teach school-aged mothers about childbirth and parenthood. Students in SAM go to classes together and get support from one another. The staff of the daycare component at the school gives advice about infant care and child development.

SAM gives school-aged mothers the help they need to have healthy babies, finish high school, and become self-sufficient, responsible parents.

Eligible students must:

- be a school-aged mother
- be a student eligible to attend TPSD
- not yet received a high school diploma
- be willing to attend an alternative high school program at the Link Center
- be willing to take part in health and parenting program.

SAM students receive:

- regular high school classes at the Link Center leading to a high school diploma
- special health classes during the school day to learn about parenthood
- individual and group counseling
- childcare for their infants/toddlers.
- free transportation (school transportation provided)
- vocational training, possibly culinary art
- advice on infant care and child development

## High School Advancement Academy

High School Advancement Academy (HSAA) is a new and innovative program for over-aged middle school students. Through immersion in core academic subject areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, we seek to accelerate their readiness for transition into high school. In addition, these students have the opportunity to take courses in health and physical education. The students who attend HSAA are designated as eighth graders for first semester. If they successfully complete all courses during first semester, they will be designated as high school freshmen during second semester. The ultimate goal is to enable these students to graduate from high school within a time frame that is in line with other students of their age group. With the sequence of courses scheduled for this academic year, students may matriculate to the high school with a possibility of 7 Carnegie Units.

The idea of this program is to eventually formulate into the Middle College concept. For some of the student identified to attend this program, they may also utilize the HSAA as an exit program to receive a high school diploma. The traditional high school setting is not an effective model for all students to achieve a high school diploma. High school educational reform initiatives such as HSAA and the Middle College High Schools are necessary to reach targeted students who are capable of academic success but may not perform well for a wide variety of reasons and life circumstances. Being able to increase the persistence rate to graduation of underperforming, underrepresented population and provide the support to do so is a key priority for Tupelo Public School District.

Students already identified as second and third year freshmen, will have the opportunity to recover credits and receive intense instruction for Algebra I and Biology. High School Advancement Academy will be designed for small class sizes. Students will be able to benefit from individualized attention.

Proposed Schedule – 7 <sup>th</sup>	
Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Pre-Algebra	Algebra I (120 minutes)
Pre-Biology	Biology (120 minutes)
Compensatory Reading	English I
Compensatory Writing	PE
Mississippi Studies/World Geography	World Geography
<b>*Before entering the HSAA, 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will receive 7th grade math and language arts immersion during summer prior to fall semester.</b>	
Proposed Schedule – 8 <sup>th</sup>	
First Semester	Second Semester
Pre-Algebra	Algebra I (120 minutes)
Pre-Biology	Biology (120 minutes)
Compensatory Reading	English I
Compensatory Writing	PE
Mississippi Studies	World Geography

Proposed Schedule -9 <sup>th</sup>	
First Semester	Second Semester
Students will enroll in elective and/or non-tested course offered through virtual classes. Credit recovery will also be offered for students.	Algebra I (120 minutes)
	Biology (120 minutes)
	English I
	PE
	World Geography

## Commonly Asked Questions

How many students can attend High School Ahead Academy?	30-50
For the 2009-2010 school year, how does a child get recommended?	HSAA is looking for current six through ninth graders during the 2009-2010 school year who's 2 or more years behind grade level.
Are the students at HSAA responsible for taking and passing the SATP?	Yes. The students at HSAA will take the Algebra I and Biology SATP and they must perform at a Basic Proficiency level or above in order to move on to high school during the 2011-2012 school year.
How large/small are the classes?	The largest core class will have an ideal teacher/student ratio of 1:10.
Is bus transportation provided?	Yes. Bus transportation will transport students who are currently enrolled in a TPSD school.
How long is the bus route to HSAA?	It depends on where someone lives. Buses will transport students from all over the district.
Does HSAA have sports?	No. However, students may be able to participate in sports for their appropriate grade level.
Does HSAA have clubs?	Yes. There may not be many offered in the initial year. We will have more clubs offered during the 2011-2012 school year.
What are the hours of operation?	Office and school hours will be concurrent to the high school normal hours of operation.
Does HSAA have a uniform dress code?	A uniform dress code will not be enforced. However, a dress code will be implemented as outline by TPSD Board of Trustees Policy.
What school calendar does HSAA follow?	HSAA will follow the traditional calendar for TPSD. However, the classes will be arranged for a block schedule.
Is HSAA a school of choice?	No. Student 2 or more years behind will be placed at

	HSAA.
If my child will be an over-aged 8 <sup>th</sup> grader, will he/she be able to move to high school during the second semester of his/her 8 <sup>th</sup> grade year?	No. HSAA is a yearlong school. However, your child will be able to enroll in high school level courses during second semester.
What is the typical age of a student who attends HSAA?	14-17 years old.
Is HSAA a behavioral/disciplinarian school?	No. High School Advancement Academy is an alternative school to help students accelerate a grade level or two based on their age.
If my child agrees to attend HSAA, but decides later to return to his/her assigned school, is that an option?	No. Once a student is placed at HSAA, he/she must complete one year of HSAA. Students may opt out after the one year requirement and then attend their regular school. This will be a decision based on the school administrators, parents, and counselors.
Does HSAA have a PTSA?	No. Since HSAA gets a new group of each year, parents cannot hold an office for 2 years. HSAA will have a Parent Advisory Group that meets monthly/quarterly.
If my child passes the Algebra I and Biology SATP's and passes the classes, will that count towards his/her graduation requirement?	Yes. If a student passes the Algebra I class and perform at a Basic performance level on the Algebra I and Biology SATP that will count towards their graduation requirement. It will count towards their 4 math classes and 4 science units' requirement. Both classes are two of the "BIG 4" students must pass in order to receive a high school diploma.
How often are the students tested?	At HSAA, there will be district benchmarks at the end of each quarter. SATP will be given at the end of the school year.
Is there a tutoring program at HSAA?	The teachers at HSAA will offer tutoring before and after school, but parents are responsible for transportation after school hours.
How often are progress reports given out to students?	At HSAA, the students receive progress reports every 3 weeks. They will have 2 progress reports before their report cards.
How does HSAA communicate with parents?	Via phone, email, mailings, web pages, letters, conferences. Parents will be strongly encouraged to visit the school and classes as often as they like.
What are on the teacher web pages?	The teachers will update their web pages daily with homework assignments, tests, projects, assessments, etc.
Are the students grouped by ability levels?	No. They will be randomly grouped according to school schedule. Typically, the students stay with the same classmates all day. They will change teachers, but very seldom do they change classmates.

**\*Notes:**

Also, there may been some discussion about “relaxing” the local graduation standards in order to accelerate the high school tenure of students attending HSAA. This will only apply if students choose HSAA as an exit program.

Because of the perception of the Fillmore Center, the program will be better served if it is taken offsite. Students currently enrolled in the C.O.R.E program are crossing over into the disciplinary program when initially they were not attending Fillmore for disciplinary reasons.

# The Early College High School

(as summarized by The Early College Initiative)

Early college high school is a bold approach, based on the principle that academic rigor, combined with the opportunity to save time and money, is a powerful motivator for students to work hard and meet serious intellectual challenges. Early college high schools blend high school and college in a rigorous yet supportive program, compressing the time it takes to complete a high school diploma and the first two years of college. The schools are designed so that low-income youth, first-generation college goers, English language learners, students of color, and other young people underrepresented in higher education can simultaneously earn a high school diploma and an Associate's degree or up to two years of credit toward a Bachelor's degree—tuition free. Initial contacts have been made with ICC and Ole Miss Tupelo. Both institutions have expressed interest in partnering with TPSD to explore Early College High School options. Criteria that will be considered are school attendance, school discipline history, grades and motivation.

## **The Basics**

### **What are early college high schools?**

Early college high schools are small schools designed so that students can earn both a high school diploma and an Associate's degree or up to two years of credit toward a Bachelor's degree. Early college high schools have the potential to improve high school graduation rates and better prepare students for high-skill careers by engaging all students in a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum and compressing the number of years to a college degree.

### **Why do we need early college high school?**

A postsecondary education is almost essential for financial and personal freedom in today's economy. A four-year college graduate earns two-thirds more than a high school graduate does. An Associate's degree translates into earnings significantly higher than those earned by an individual with a high school diploma alone. National statistics on the progression of students from high school to college illustrate why it is imperative to better connect and integrate secondary and postsecondary schooling.

### **Aren't high school students too young to do college work?**

Over the last decade, opportunities have expanded for high school students to earn college credit. Advanced

Placement and International Baccalaureate courses and their accompanying tests give many students ways to take college-level courses from their regular teachers, usually during their senior year. Students in dual enrollment programs remain formally enrolled in high school but take college courses, taught by either high school or college faculty, in classrooms located either at their high school or on a college campus. At the same time, more and more community colleges are developing ways to accelerate high school students (as well as high school dropouts) by enrolling them in college courses. Meanwhile, a variety of postsecondary incentive programs reward students with free or reduced college tuition for finishing some college work in high school. And, at the most dramatic end of the continuum, students at middle colleges and early college high schools can complete up to two years of a college program while still enrolled in high school.

Until recently, this educational terrain of college-courses-in-high-school belonged almost exclusively to a small, privileged group of young people: those whose families could afford high-quality private high schools and those in well-funded public schools that offered Advanced Placement and similar options to their highest-achieving students. But today's programs that allow students to earn college credit in high school are no longer limited to elite schools. Students from a wide range of backgrounds and with diverse prior accomplishments are demonstrating that the academic challenge provided by college-level courses can be an inspiration, not a barrier. The job of early college high school faculty and partners is to refine the instructional practices and wraparound support structures that move students from inspiration to true achievement. Some of the most promising strategies currently in use in early college high schools include: adopting school-wide literacy practices, focusing on inquiry-based instruction across grade levels and content areas, and creating "shadow" or "lab" courses to complement college courses.

The question for the future is the degree to which opportunities like these will increase the number of young people who gain a postsecondary credential—especially among those who remain underrepresented in higher education.

### **Who does the Early College High School Initiative serve?**

The Early College High School Initiative focuses on young people for whom the transition into postsecondary education is now problematic. Its priority is to serve low-income young people, first-generation college goers, English language learners, and students of color, all of whom are statistically underrepresented in higher education and for whom society often has low aspirations for academic achievement. The initiative will increase the number of these young people who attain an Associate's degree or two years of college credit and the opportunity to attain a Bachelor's degree.

## **The Design**

### **What do all early college high schools have in common?**

Each early college high school develops a unique vision and a learning environment that represents community interests and student needs. However, all early college high schools share the following characteristics:

- Students have the opportunity to earn an Associate's degree or up to two years of transferable college credit while in high school.
- Mastery and competence are rewarded with enrollment in college-level courses and the opportunity to earn two years of college credit for free.
- The years to a postsecondary degree are compressed.
- The middle grades are included in the school, or there is outreach to middle-grade students to promote academic preparation and awareness of the early college high school option.
- Schools provide academic and social supports that help students succeed in a challenging course of study.
- Learning takes place in small learning environments that demand rigorous, high-quality work and provide extensive support.
- The physical transition between high school and college is eliminated—and with it the need to apply for college and for financial aid during the last year of high school.

### **How is early college high school connected to other high school reforms?**

Early college high school is not the only effective way to improve education; rather it is one among a number of promising approaches for improving education for all young people. In particular, early college high school shares the attributes of high-performing small schools:

- A common focus on key, research-based goals and an intellectual mission;
- Small, personalized learning environments, with no more than 100 students per grade;
- Respect and responsibility among students, among faculty, and between students and faculty;
- Time for staff collaboration and for including parents and the community in an education partnership;
- Technology as a tool for designing and delivering engaging, imaginative curricula; and



- Rigorous academic standards for both high school work and the first two years of college-level studies.

### **Is early college high school designed for gifted and talented kids?**

As with many innovative educational pathways to a high school degree and beyond, early college high school is appropriate for a wide variety of young people. The partners in the initiative believe that encountering the rigor, depth, and intensity of college work at an earlier age inspires average, underachieving, and well-prepared high school students. However, the small schools being created through the Early College High School Initiative focus on students for whom a smooth transition into postsecondary education is now problematic.

### **What is the difference between early college high school and dual enrollment or Advanced Placement?**

What sets early college high school apart from dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, and other pre-college programs is the reach and coherence of the blended academic program and a relentless focus on underrepresented students. As with early college high school, Advanced Placement and dual enrollment strategies give students a taste of college, yielding multiple benefits: for students, better preparation for college; for institutions, lower remediation costs and higher retention; and for high schools, improved understanding of the demands of college and an expanded set of curricular offerings. However, only early college high school:

- Fully integrates students' high school and college experiences, both intellectually and socially;
- Enables students to earn up to two years of college credit toward a degree while in high school, not just a few college credits;
- Blends the curriculum as a coherent unit, with high school and college-level work melded into a single academic program that meets the requirements for both a high school diploma and, potentially, an Associate's degree;
- Grants college credits through the postsecondary partner institution and enables students to accumulate the credits toward a degree from that institution or to transfer them to another college.

### **What is the role of the postsecondary partners?**

Each school in the Early College High School Initiative is a partnership between a school district and a postsecondary partner. The postsecondary partners include community and technical colleges, four-year

colleges, and universities (both private and public). The postsecondary partners are key players in the design and day-to-day operation of early college high schools, which treat the high school years and the first two years of college as a single, coherent course of study.

An early college high school requires sustained involvement from both the secondary and postsecondary sides. Administrators and faculty from the postsecondary institution participate in the life of the early college high school both formally and informally. Their involvement includes participation in: school planning processes and governing boards, curriculum committees, syllabus planning activities, co-delivery of courses with high school faculty, provision of tutors, mentors and student teachers, and the creation of “scaffolded” learning experiences such as “bridge” courses to ease the transition to college-level work and mini-seminars for younger students.

#### **What are the costs of running an early college high school?**

Early college high schools are public schools, funded by their school districts, as are traditional high schools. While there are limitations to comparing early college high schools to regular high schools, a pilot study of budgets suggests that costs for fully implemented early college high schools may range from 5 percent to 12 percent more than costs of regular public high schools. Another pilot study of return on investment resulting from early college suggests significant benefits to students and their families, to communities, and to states based on greater high school and college completion rates. (Sources: Michael Webb. 2004. *What Is the Cost of Planning and Implementing Early College High School?* Boston: Jobs for the Future; Augenblick, Palaich, & Associates, Inc. 2006. *Return on Investment in Early College High Schools*. Denver: APA.)

That said, the diversity among early college high school sites presents a challenge to understanding overall financial implications. The blending of secondary and postsecondary resources further complicates cost calculations. An important activity of the Early College High School Initiative is to collect data that lead to financial planning models for sustainability and replication.

#### **Do early college high school students pay college tuition to get credit for college courses?**

No. Early college high school courses, including college-level courses taken on the campuses of partner colleges, are free to students.

#### **What do students do after they complete early college high school?**

When students complete early college high school, they have a high school diploma and a significant number of college credits or even an Associate’s degree. Either outcome gives early college high school graduates a

leg up when they enter a two- or four-year college or university. The initiative's partnering schools, colleges, and organizations expect this jumpstart will increase the number of young people who earn a Bachelor's degree. This expectation is supported by current research on pathways to college completion, which recognizes the "20-credit threshold" as the breaking point between students who complete a college degree and those who do not. (Source: Clifford Adelman. 2006. *The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion from High School Through College*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.)

### **How do early college high schools differ among themselves?**

Schools participating in the Early College High School Initiative embrace a set of common objectives and characteristics, while demonstrating multiple strategies for pursuing those objectives. In fact, the schools differ significantly from one another. Variations include the type of school (public, charter), the type of postsecondary partner (two-year college, four-year college, university), the location (on or off the campus of the postsecondary partner), and the grades covered (starting in sixth, seventh, or ninth grade or ungraded).

Some early college high schools, by virtue of their mission or location, also vary in the student population they serve (e.g., former dropouts, primarily African-American students, Native-American students from local reservations, English Language Learners). Some early college high schools distinguish themselves with a thematic focus (e.g., writing, the arts, independent inquiry, or math, science and engineering).

## **The Outcomes**

### **What is the early evidence that early college works?**

Although the initiative is relatively young, early data from early college high schools are promising. First, the schools are reaching their target populations. Nationally, roughly three-fourths of the young people attending early college high schools are students of color, while nearly 60 percent report eligibility for free or reduced-priced lunch (a conservative indication of the number of students from low-income families). Most students attending early college high schools will be the first in their families to go to college.

In contrast to alarming national data for students with similar demographic profiles, attendance rates for early college high school students average over 90 percent, indicating high levels of student engagement and commitment to the academic program. Grade-to-grade promotion rates in early college high schools also exceed 90 percent, and the first students have graduated with impressive results.

In 2006, three early college high schools granted diplomas to their first graduating classes.

Additional data on outcomes will be available from the Student Information System (SIS). The SIS is a highly secure system that provides data to support the Early College High School Initiative. The SIS collects

aggregated data and unidentifiable, student-level data for the period beginning at least two years prior to enrollment in the early college high school through graduation or departure from the school. Schools and school districts supply data related to a number of broad categories: staffing, student demographics, student longitudinal information, early college high school courses, student GPA, transcripts, student enrollment, student discipline, student attendance, and graduation. The SIS will document students' post-early college high school enrollment in higher education through the National Student Clearinghouse. The SIS is coordinated by Jobs for the Future and Public Consulting Group.

## **Who Does What**

### **What is the role of the intermediary partners and/or school developers?**

Increasingly, foundations look to "intermediary organizations" as partners in order to jumpstart new ventures, conduct feasibility studies, create due diligence processes, engage outside experts, and provide professional development for the schools and communities they serve. An intermediary organization acts as a grant manager, and it selects and supports school sites, especially during the planning and start-up phases. Current early college high school partners run the gamut from organizations experienced in creating or redesigning schools, to national constituency-based organizations, to community foundations, to higher education institutions and organizations. The 13 partners work directly with selected early college high schools, school districts, and postsecondary institutions. They provide start-up and ongoing technical support, guidance, and professional development for their networks of schools.

### **How do I start an early college high school?**

New early college high schools are created through the existing partnerships funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Individual schools cannot apply to become part of the initiative. Interested parties should contact one of the partners funded to plan and implement early college high schools.

Although the Early College High School Initiative directly serves only designated schools, this Web site is a resource to educators and school developers outside of the initiative, offering important information and resources.

### **Can my child attend an early college high school?**

Each early college high school is a public school and, therefore, participates in the school assignment process of its district or a charter school application process.