



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

High School Workforce Development
Program

Session Law 2004-124 Section 7.22
(HB 1414, 2004 Budget Act)

Date Due: September 15, 2007

Report #51, 54

DPI Chronological Schedule, 2006-2007

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

HOWARD N. LEE
Chairman :: Raleigh

WAYNE MCDEVITT
Vice Chair :: Asheville

BEVERLY PERDUE
Lieutenant Governor :: New Bern

RICHARD MOORE
State Treasurer :: Kittrell

KATHY A. TAFT
Greenville

KEVIN D. HOWELL
Raleigh

SHIRLEY E. HARRIS
Troy

EULADA P. WATT
Charlotte

ROBERT "TOM" SPEED
Boone

MELISSA E. BARTLETT
Raleigh

JOHN A. TATE III
Charlotte

PATRICIA N. WILLOUGHBY
Raleigh

NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., State Superintendent

301 N. Wilmington Street :: Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2825

In compliance with federal law, NC Public Schools administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to:

Associate Superintendent :: Office of Curriculum and Instructional Services

8307 Mail Service Center :: Raleigh, NC 27699-6307 :: Telephone 919-807-3761 :: Fax 919-807-3767

Visit us on the Web: www.ncpublicschools.org

Summary Status of the *Learn and Earn* Early College High School Initiative (formerly the High School Workforce Development Program)

In September 2004, Governor Mike Easley launched the *Learn and Earn* Early College High School Initiative in response to workforce needs in North Carolina. The initiative is administered jointly by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina New Schools Project. It is designed to improve high schools, to better prepare students for college and career, to create a seamless curriculum between high school and college, and to provide work-based experiences to students. Situated on the campuses of two- or four- year colleges and universities, *Learn and Earn* early college high schools (ECHS) will provide an academically rigorous course of study with the goal of ensuring that all students graduate with a high school diploma and two years of university transfer credit or an associate degree. Governor Easley has laid out the goal of establishing at least one *Learn and Earn* ECHS in every county in North Carolina by 2008.

SL 2004-124 calls on the State Board of Education to report the results of an annual evaluation of the *Learn and Earn* Early College High School Initiative. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) in conjunction with the North Carolina New Schools Project (NCNSP) is monitoring and evaluating the progress of the schools in implementing the school model and in the schools' effect on student achievement. NCDPI and NCNSP is partnering with Jobs for the Future in establishing a comprehensive student-level database to collect and analyze data on the achievement of students who attend *Learn and Earn* ECHS. NCDPI and NCNSP are also partners along with SERVE, Duke University, Abt Associates and UNC-Greensboro in a federally funded comprehensive research study on the effects of the *Learn and Earn* ECHS model on student achievement and other outcomes. While data from these two evaluation efforts will not be available for another year, this report will provide an update on the initiative and the schools that were open for students for the 2006-07 school year. In addition, because student performance data from the 2006-07 school year is not yet available, student performance data for the *Learn and Earn* ECHS will be included in a follow-up report in January 2008.

***Learn and Earn* Early College High Schools**

Thirty-three *Learn and Earn* ECHS were open for students during the 2006-07 school year. Each of these schools is working in partnership with a community college or university that is providing facilities for the school and college-level courses for the students. Of those 33, four are partnered with a UNC system school and 29 are partnered with an NC community college. Seven of the 33 sites existed as middle college high schools prior to the *Learn and Earn* initiative and became a part of the initiative to convert from a middle college into an early college. Middle college high schools are also located on a university or community college campus. However, students do not

typically attend the school from 9th grade until graduation, and they are only guaranteed to complete some college credit and not a full two years of university transfer credit or an associate degree. For a complete list of the 33 sites, please see Attachment A.

Student Demographics

Collectively, the 33 *Learn and Earn* ECHS served nearly 3,100 students during the 2006-07 school year. Overall, most of the early colleges served primarily 9th and 10th grade students for the 2006-07 school year. Over the next four or five years, the schools will add an additional cohort of ninth graders until they reach their capacity of approximately 200-400 students each. The number of students per grade level who were served in *Learn and Earn* ECHS for the 2006-07 school year is presented in Table 1 below. Student demographic information for the 33 schools combined is presented in the Table 2 below.

Table 1. Number of Students per Grade Level in *Learn and Earn* Early College High Schools, 2006-07

Grade Level	No. of Students
9 th	1948
10 th	666
11 th	273
12 th	206
Total	3093

Source: 1st Month ADM data from NCNDPI

Table 2. Race and Gender of Students in *Learn and Earn* Early College High Schools, 2006-07

	Male	Female	Total
White	25.0%	29.9%	54.9%
Black	12.6%	20.0%	32.5%
Hispanic	3.0%	4.3%	7.3%
Other	2.1%	3.2%	5.3%
Total	42.7%	57.3%	100.0%

Source: NCDPI

Funding and Additional Support

The 33 *Learn and Earn* ECHS that were open for students for the 2006-07 school year signed a five year implementation agreement with NCDPI and NCNSP to receive grant funding from the state and technical assistance in the implementation of their early college high school. For details on the amount and uses of grant funding from the 2006-07 school year for each *Learn and Earn* early college high school, see Table 3 below.

Table 3. *Learn and Earn* Early College High School Implementation Grant Funding, 2006-07

	Funding 2006-07
School Change and Instructional Coaches	\$19,000
Teacher Professional Development	\$10,000
Principal Professional Development	\$6,000
1 Guidance Counselor and 1 Work-Based Learning Coordinator	\$140,000
1 College Liaison	\$58,000
Evaluation	\$3,500
Local Cash ¹	\$14,500
College Textbooks	\$31,000
Total:	\$285,000

¹ *Learn and Earn* ECHS that were in their first year of implementation receive an additional \$10,000 in local cash to help with additional first year implementation needs.

The implementation grant funding covers, among other things, the cost of a school change and instructional coach, professional development for teachers and principals, three instructional support positions, evaluation, local cash to cover additional expenses, including travel to professional development events and funding to purchase college textbooks for students.

School Change and Instructional Coaches: Each *Learn and Earn* ECHS is assigned a professionally trained and highly experienced school change coach who serves as a facilitator for the planning and implementation of the school. This year, each *Learn and Earn* ECHS also received the services of a highly trained and experienced instructional coach who worked directly with the faculty on-site to support sustained change in the

instructional delivery model. Both types of coaches are identified and trained by NCNSP and NCDPI. Brokering organizations, such as the Leadership Group of the Carolinas and Bridgewood Educational Services, work with NCNSP and NCDPI to facilitate the coaching process.

Teacher and Principal Professional Development: Over the course of the school year, teachers, counselors and principals participated in a series of professional development sessions on strengthening instruction and school leadership with a specific focus on three key areas: identifying and applying rigor, enhancing teacher collaboration and helping schools effectively use project-based learning to leverage improved outcomes for all students. See Attachment B for a complete calendar of the teacher and principal professional development events over the past year.

- ***Calibrating Rigor:*** One of the most effective efforts, both for teachers and principals, was the year's sharp focus on rigor: defining it in theory and identifying it in practice. NCNSP's Summer Institute in June 2006 laid the foundation for developing a deeper understanding of rigor through discussions led by Tony Wagner, co-director of the Change Leadership Group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Then, later in the fall, principals and teacher-leaders from each of the state's *Learn and Earn* ECHS met in workshops to define concrete elements of rigor in terms of instruction, curriculum and student assessment. Each two-person team then visited classrooms in top-performing comprehensive high schools around the state to apply their definitions of rigor. Participants said the session and the visits helped them better understand classroom rigor, although many conceded they had seen little of it in action.
- ***Strengthening Teacher Collaboration:*** Emphasis continued during the year on the development of professional learning communities within the schools to strengthen teacher collaboration, and in turn, student learning. Pairs of teachers from each *Learn and Earn* ECHS were introduced to the Critical Friends Group approach to teacher collaboration developed by the National School Reform Faculty. The teacher teams met during two three-day workshops in the fall, as part of an eight-day series during the year. Participants said they saw real value in the tools of discourse used in the Critical Friends model and said they planned to use them in developing groups among faculty in their own schools. Principals from *Learn and Earn* ECHS also participated Critical Friends Group training that was tailored in helping to support and sustain the development of a professional learning community in their schools.
- ***Project-Based Learning:*** Teacher teams from each of the schools participated in sessions throughout the year in project-based learning. Starting with the NCNSP's Summer Institute in June 2006, the two-teacher teams began developing project-based learning units, which they continued to develop and implement over the course of the year through both online sessions and follow-up workshops. These sessions were designed to allow participants to share their PBL unit and to receive feedback from colleagues from around the state. These sessions utilized both a web-based, interactive tool and a conference call tool. Principals also received

professional development on project-based learning to give them the necessary knowledge so that they could recognize the correct strategies used in project-based learning, and be able to talk about and support this approach in their schools.

- *Developing a College-Going Culture:* In September, principals and counselors from *Learn and Earn* ECHS participated in a session entitled “High Expectations and High Supports: Developing a College-Going Culture.” The session was designed to help principals and counselors develop an understanding of a college-going culture, learn how to develop a college-going culture in their school, and learn strategies in supporting students in achieving in a college-going culture. Presenters from the Middle College National Consortium facilitated the session. Participants were provided differentiated seminars depending on either their role as a principal or counselor and the implementation year of their school.
- *Building Sustainability:* In March, principals from *Learn and Earn* ECHS and their superintendents participated in a three-day statewide conference entitled “Sustainability: Building a Culture of Support Inside and Out.” Overall, the conference was intended as an opportunity for school leaders to identify barriers to success for ECHS and to share and generate productive approaches and effective alternatives to those barriers.
- *Teaching and Learning Conference:* In April, teams of two to three teachers and principals from existing *Learn and Earn* ECHS from across the state gathered in Winston-Salem for the 2007 Teaching and Learning Conference. The conference offered the educators the opportunity to develop curriculum for their schools and to receive feedback and support from teacher-facilitators working in innovative high schools from across the country.
- *2007 NCNSP Summer Institute:* Teams of teachers, counselors and principals from each *Learn and Earn* ECHS gathered in Winston-Salem in June for the 2007 NCNSP Summer Institute. The institute was focused on strengthening student advisory periods and partnerships with higher education colleagues. Educators also probed how to integrate literacy instruction across the curriculum. As part of that work, they heard from Maria Reyes, one of the original “Freedom Writers” from Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, CA, recently featured in a movie starring Oscar winner Hillary Swank. Reyes described how teacher Erin Gruwell’s English class helped change her path from one of gang member to college graduate.

Instructional Support Positions: *Learn and Earn* ECHS implementation grants also provide each school with funding for one additional guidance counselor, one work-based learning experiences coordinator and one college liaison. The work-based learning experiences coordinator helps facilitate partnerships with community organizations and local businesses and that will provide internships and job shadowing opportunities for ECHS students. The college liaison position helps connect the university or community college and the ECHS and facilitates student placement in college courses and the identification of additional college resources to support the early college high school.

Sites Opening for the 2007-08 School Year

During the 2006-07 school year, 14 *Learn and Earn* ECHS sites were in the planning stage. Nine of those sites will open for students for the 2007-08 school year. For a complete list of the nine new *Learn and Earn* schools, please see Attachment A. Eight of the nine new schools are partnered with community colleges and one new ECHS (Polk) is a virtual early college partnered with the UNC-Greensboro iSchool. The Polk Virtual Early College is the first of its kind in the state and is located on the Polk County High School campus.

Each planning site received a small planning grant from NCDPI and NCNSP (approximately \$40,000) which was used during the year to fund a school change coach, various planning activities and additional associated costs. The planning activities included:

- *Planning support:* In August and December, NCNSP facilitated two planning support meetings for district and higher education partners from *Learn and Earn* ECHS planning teams. During the two meetings, the planning teams had the opportunity to meet and begin working with their school change coach, received their planning manual and planning tools, discussed the characteristics and skills of high school freshman and college freshman, discussed what intentional supports need to be put in place to help students be prepared by the time they are college freshmen and discussed the characteristics of a successful early college high school principal.
- *Study visits:* In November and December, NCNSP facilitated study visits to several model schools from around the country for two members from each *Learn and Earn* ECHS planning team. Planning teams visited the International School at LaGuardia and the Middle College at LaGuardia in New York and University Park Campus School in Worcester, MA. Each planning team could send one LEA planning team member and one university or community college planning team member. Each study visit included an initial briefing session, in which NCNSP and NCDPI staff provided background information on the schools that the participants would be visiting and lead the participants in discussions about what questions they hoped to get answered. NCNSP staff also lead participants in an accountable talk focused on an article on student support and reviewed the *Learn and Earn* ECHS design principles. After the site visits, NCNSP and NCDPI staff led participants in a debriefing session in which participants discussed what they saw, why it is important, and what they intend to do with the information they have gathered. Participants prepared powerpoint presentations from what they had learned to share with their other planning team members. Each participant also received a packet before the trip that included background information on the schools they are visiting, tools to help them gather information

from the site visits, the accountable talk article, and additional articles on high school redesign and the design principles.

- *2007 NCNSP Summer Institute:* Teams of teachers, principals and counselors from the nine new *Learn and Earn* ECHS also participated in the 2007 NCNSP Summer Institute, described above.

Evaluation Efforts

NCNSP and NCDPI have built a partnership with Jobs for the Future (JFF), the intermediary for the national Early College High School Initiative, to include North Carolina's ECHS in the Early College High School Initiative Student Information System. The Student Information System (SIS) collects and analyzes student-level data from the schools on such areas as demographics, attendance, course taking and course completion patterns, test scores, GPA, disciplinary incidences, and number of college courses taken. The Student Information System will allow NCNSP, NCDPI and our ECHS to better track and evaluate the progress of students in our early colleges. Data from the database will be available next year.

SERVE, the southeast region Federal Education Laboratory, in partnership with Duke University, the North Carolina New Schools Project, UNC-Greensboro, Abt Associates and other organizations, has received funding from the U.S. Department of Education to conduct a rigorous, experimental research study of the *Learn and Earn* Early College High School Initiative. The research project will study the impact of the early college model on important student outcomes and will seek to determine the model's effectiveness with different student populations. The project will also study the implementation of the components of the ECHS by examining the association of those components with student outcomes. This study will provide useful information to NCNSP, NCDPI and our early colleges on how to improve our practice.

Attachment A. *Learn and Earn* Early College High Schools as of September 2007

Opened Fall 2005

Anson County Schools	Anson County Early College High School
Buncombe County Schools	Buncombe County Early / Middle College
Catawba County Schools	Catawba Valley Early College High School
Clinton City/Sampson	Sampson County Early College High School
Cumberland County Schools	Cross Creek Early College High School
Davidson County Schools	Davidson Early College High School
Durham Public Schools	Josephine Dobbs Clement Early College High School
Edgecombe County schools	Edgecombe County Early College High School
Guilford County Schools	The Early / Middle College at GTCC
Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	Nash-Rocky Mount Early / Middle College High School
Iredell-Statesville Schools	Collaborative College for Technology and Leadership
Robeson County Schools	Robeson County Early College High School
Rutherford County Schools	Rutherford Early College High School

Opened Fall 2006

Brunswick County Schools	Brunswick County Early College High School
Caldwell County Schools	Caldwell Early College
Cherokee County Schools	Tri-County Early College High School
Columbus County Schools	Southeastern Early College High School
Craven County Schools	Craven Early College High School
Greene County Schools	Greene County Early College High School
Guilford County Schools	GTCC Early/Middle College of Entertainment Technology
Guilford County Schools	NC A&T University Early/Middle College High School
Haywood County Schools	Haywood Early College High School
Hoke County Schools	SandHoke Early College High School
Lee County Schools	Lee County Early College High School
Macon County Schools	Macon County Early College High School
McDowell County Schools	McDowell Early College
New Hanover County Schools	Isaac Bear Early College High School
Pender County Schools	Pender Early College High School
Randolph County Schools	Randolph Early College High School
Stanly County Schools	Stanly Early College High School
Surry County Schools	Surry Early College High School of Design
Union County Schools	Union County Early College
Wake County Schools	Wake Early College of Health Sciences

Opening Fall 2007

Davie County Schools
Guilford County Schools
Lenoir County Schools
New Hanover County Schools

Polk County Schools
Richmond County Schools
Scotland County Schools
Wayne County Schools
Yadkin County Schools

Davie County Early College High School
GTCC Early / Middle College East
Lenoir County Early College High School
New Hanover County Coastal Early College High School
Polk County Early College High School (with UNC-G
iSchool)
Richmond County Early College High School
Scotland Richmond Early College High School
Wayne Early / Middle College High School
Yadkin County Early College High School