**What is an Early College High School?**

The Early College High School model, created by the Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL), gives students a head start on the rest of their lives. These schools allow students to earn both a high school diploma and half of an associate degree or up to two years of credit toward a bachelor’s degree. While open to all students, the model specifically serves low-income young people, and first generation college students. All college credits are offered to students for free through Ivy Tech Community College.

Early College helps remove many of the barriers that prevent students from advancing to college. Students receive enhanced supports to help them excel both academically and personally. Early Colleges are united by their commitment to the Early College High School Initiative’s core principles:

* Early College schools are committed to serving students underrepresented in higher education.
* Early College schools are created and sustained by a local education agency, a higher education institution, and the community, all of whom are jointly accountable for student success.
* Early College schools and their higher education partners and community jointly develop an integrated academic program so that all students earn one or two years of transferable college credit leading to college completion.
* Early College schools engage all students in a comprehensive support system that develops academic and social skills as well as the behaviors and conditions necessary for college completion.
* Early College schools and their higher education and community partners work with intermediaries to create conditions and advocate for supportive policies that advanced the early college movement.

**Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation research found the following Key Findings:**

* Early College students were more likely to graduate from high school than comparison students
* Early College students were more likely to enroll in college than comparison students
* Early College students were more likely than comparison students to enroll in two-year colleges and were more likely to enroll in four-year colleges
* Early College students were more likely to earn a college degree than comparison students.
* Early Colleges benefit all types of students.
* Early College students had more positive high school experiences than comparison students in terms of rigor, school’s college-going culture, level of instructor support and quality of support for completing college and financial aid applications