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# Flexible Pathways Talking Points

## Early College

Is this Flexible Pathway option the best choice? Below are prompting questions to be used with the [Vermont Flexible Pathways Tool](#) to assist in a conversation to determine if this pathway is the best fit. These sources do not represent an exhaustive list but are intended to provide a basis for discussion.

### What is Early College?

Vermont's Early College Program (ECP) allows eligible 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to enroll full-time for one academic year at one of the participating and approved higher education institutions. The ECP simultaneously serves as a student's senior year of high school and one academic year of college, tuition free. Upon completion of ECP, the student receives credit from the postsecondary institution and meets any remaining secondary graduation requirements.

Students in the ECP must unenroll from their high school and enroll as a full-time student in the postsecondary institution. Upon completion of the college spring semester, students must re-enroll in their high school to receive a high school diploma. Secondary schools are therefore responsible for helping eligible students prepare for ECP as part of the PLP process, ensuring the college coursework satisfies remaining graduation requirements and appears on the high school transcript, and awarding the high school diploma. For more information on ECP please visit the [Vermont Early College Website](#).

### Why Early College?

- Degree exploration/Career exploration
- Already know what you want to study
- Already taken highest level courses
- Ready to explore subjects not offered in high school/classes of personal interest
- Increased rigor/academic challenge
- Better understanding of college expectations and the role of a college student
- Time and money savings
- Explore college campus/college environment/learn how to navigate college campus
- Interact with college professors, and students
- Learn college classroom management systems and online course platforms
- Access to college tutoring service/library/online resources/learning center
- Develop a college identity
- Diversity
- More responsibility and fulfillment
- Earn more money by attaining a degree or certificate

### Are you ready for Early College?

- Early college eligibility requirements met (page 6 [Early College Program Manual](#))
- Social emotional reflection
  - Self-awareness - Demonstrates self-advocacy, self-motivated
  - Social awareness – Understanding social and ethical norms

Contact: Student Pathways Division at [AOE.EarlyCollege@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.EarlyCollege@vermont.gov)

- Self-management – Critical thinking, problem solving
- Responsible decision making – Time management
- Relationship skills – Communication, networking
- Learning environment aligns with learning style
- Academic Reflection
  - How does this experience meet performance indicators necessary for graduation
    - Academic content area
    - Transferable skill
  - Prerequisite course(s) completed
  - Course aligns with learning goals in PLP
  - Taken and passed a Dual Enrollment course
  - Taken and received college credit for AP classes
  - Attendance record
  - The IEP team or the 504 team approves
    - Updated IEP/504 documents
    - Become familiar with accommodations/modifications available
  - Accuplacer scores in the specified approved range for the subject and institution
  - Completed CCV's Introduction to College and Careers
  - Demonstrates skills in:
    - Technology
    - Essay writing
    - Mathematical formula
    - Scientific method

## Do you have?

- Family or caregiver, community, and college support outside of secondary school
- Do you have transportation if needed
- Financial support for textbooks, lab fees, materials fees, and any other costs (for some courses these costs can be substantial). Students could be eligible for a need-based (income contingent) stipend and grant, ask your school counselor for more information
- Adequate technology and internet access
- Time built into school schedule to work on courses

## Have you?

- Scheduled a college orientation
- Spoke with your guardians, School Counselor, and College Advisor
- Located online or in-person college resources
- Researched fees associated with classes
- Talked to your schools IT Department to see if your technology will support the colleges platform (i.e., Chromebooks not always compatible)
- Researched FAFSA and Vermont Grant guidance recourses

## Have you thought about?

- Leaving your high school/friends
- Time management tools

- Lack of access to school lunch
- The effects of ECP on your class standing, GPA

## **Did you know?**

- You may have to attend college when your high school is on break
- There will be approximately 10 hours of work each week for a 3-4 credit course. ECP is similar to having a full-time job
- Some courses may only be offered in person or only online
- Students are responsible for the grade received and it will appear on official college and high school transcripts
- If you don't pass a course, it could mean that you lack the requirements for high school graduation
- Failing college grades could cause future financial aid ramifications
- ECP students are held to the same grading standards and assessments (e.g., papers, portfolios, quizzes, labs, etc.) as other post-secondary students enrolled in that college level course