Early Middle College Handbook

Midland Public Schools



2026

Program Introduction

Midland Public Schools' Early Middle College program (EMC) is a **five-year** high school program of study where students earn a high school diploma while also earning up to 62 transferable college credits from one of the following higher education institutions: Delta College, Davenport University, Northwood University, or Saginaw Valley State University.

Students may join the program in either 10th or 11th grade year of high school and agree to remain with Midland Public Schools through an "extra year" of high school that consists of college credits. During this time, students take a combination of high school classes and college classes, while gradually increasing the number of college courses over the span of the program. Typically, students take 6-7 college credits per semester in their junior year, 9-12 college credits per semester in their senior year, and 12-16 college credits per semester in their 13th year.

These college credits must be applied towards one of the following options: a four-year degree from one of the universities in our EMC program, an associate's degree from Delta College, or a MEMCA technical certification from one of our postsecondary EMC partners.

MPS' Early Middle College program is different from traditional dual enrollment, which is offered through both of our high schools. With dual enrollment, high school students enroll in individual college courses with a local college or university instead of taking a high school course in their schedule. The student completes the dual enrollment course with little to no support from high school staff. The EMC program is structured so that students are provided with a deliberate and specific course of study that includes support services from our EMC staff, high school staff, and our postsecondary partners. Both programs use state school funding to pay for college credits earned by high school students. For information about dual enrollment, please contact your high school counselor.

An advantage to our EMC Program is that it is designed to prepare students for post-secondary study and highly skilled employment opportunities while saving students and families time and money as they pursue both a high school diploma and college credits in the program with its additional year of high school.

It is important to note that the total college credits offered to students in the program can not exceed 62 credits; if students wish to take more credits per semester or take more than 62 credits, they are responsible for the cost.

Students considering the EMC program must be motivated and up for the challenge of meeting the requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum, the graduation requirements for Midland Public Schools, and the rigors of college-level coursework.

Midland Public Schools (MPS) began its EMC program in 2022. As the program grows and evolves, we continue to adapt this handbook.

EMC Program Overview

Goals of the Program

Midland Public Schools' Early Middle College (EMC) program is designed to increase college access, improve student success in both high school and college courses, and support a smooth transition from high school to college for students. The program provides academic and wraparound support for students who may benefit from a more structured college pathway, including:

- underrepresented in college
- economically disadvantaged
- at-risk of not attending a postsecondary education program
- multi-language learner
- first-generation college student
- any student seeking or needing support with the transition from high school to college

The ultimate goal is for students to complete one of the following outcomes by the end of their fifth year of high school:

- An Associate's degree (62 credits)
- 60+ transferable college credits
- An occupational certificate in an area such as CNA, phlebotomy, etc.
- A MEMCA technical certificate, which includes:
  - 15+ college credits,
  - Completion of a MEMCA-approved College Readiness curriculum,
  - And either a minimum of 100 hours of verified community service or 40 hours of career exploration, job shadowing, clinical work, or internship experience (or a combination of the two options that equals 70+ hours)

Who is Eligible to Participate?

Students who have earned credit in all of their high school courses and are on track to graduate from high school.

Students who meet the requirements on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing portion of the PSAT: 460

- Students entering 10th grade (for Delta); entering 11th grade (Delta, Davenport, Northwood).
- Students who have a strong record of attendance.
- Students who have good time-management skills.
- Students who can self-advocate.
- Students who are hard workers
- Students who are mature and can work independently without parental

support.

Students must begin the program no later than the fall semester of their junior year.

Process for Applying to the EMC program

The process to apply for the Early Middle College program is as follows:

- The student and family discuss the student's high school and post-high school plans and whether the EMC program is a good fit for the student.
- The student and family discuss the option of the EMC program with their high school counselor.
- The student and family attend an in-person informational session with their parent/guardian (Early December).
- Complete an application (January).
- The student sits for an interview with the EMC Coordinator.
- The EMC Coordinator will review the application, interview notes, transcripts, and any other pertinent information to decide if the student will be admitted to the Early Middle College Program.
- The student and family are notified of the EMC Coordinator's decision on acceptance into the program by letter/email.

Timeline for Applying to the EMC program

1. In November, December, and January, announcements about the EMC informational sessions are made in the district's Communique and each high school's communications. Counselors also promote the program and are a good resource for information about the program.

2. Parents and students are highly encouraged to attend one of the informational sessions offered by the district, which is typically held in December and/or January. MPS typically hosts two evening sessions (one at DHS and one at MHS) and one virtual session that are open to all interested parents and students.

3. At the informational sessions, the MPS EMC application will be shared with attendees. This application indicates your interest in the program and is typically due on January 31 for participation in the Fall of that year.

4. Student applications are then reviewed, and students are selected to participate in the program. Typically, students are notified by the end of February.

Timeline of Important Events for the New EMC Cohort

Once accepted into the program, several steps must be completed by the student to be formally admitted into the EMC program. These steps are specific for each post-secondary partner but generally include:

- applying to the college that aligns to the student's chosen program,
- submitting the college's enrollment authorization form,
- setting up a college online account,
- and registering for college classes.

Davenport and Northwood: Students will meet individually with college advisors to register for classes.
Delta: Students will register for classes after meeting with the MPS district EMC Coordinator.
Saginaw Valley State University: Students will meet individually with college advisors to register for classes.

Mandatory College Kickoff Event
All EMC students will participate in a kickoff event in August that is held on the student's chosen college campus. This event helps the student get familiar with the college campus and the college's support network. This event also helps to prepare the student for the demands of their college coursework. The date for each college's kickoff event is set in May before school ends. **While the event is mandatory for students to attend, parents are also strongly encouraged to attend.**

Academic Information

Attendance
Regular attendance is an essential component of success for all EMC students. Students can only expect to learn or succeed in school if they attend regularly.

Students are expected to attend every college course session, in whatever format the course is offered. Students are responsible for checking each course syllabus for attendance information. It is the responsibility of students to know the attendance policy for each class and to notify their instructors if there is a conflict that will result in students missing classes. Students must notify their professor in writing using their college email if they will be absent from a class (even when ill).

Please note that professors can drop students from the course for nonattendance. Some professors will do this if a student misses a single class during the first week of school, while others approach this differently. If this happens after the withdrawal date, students will incur the cost of tuition, fees, and books for the class.

College Course Content
College course content is determined by the college faculty and administration. All courses are instructed by college faculty at the college level. Mature content may be included as part of class discussions and curriculum.

Course Modality
All four post-secondary partners offer classes in various modalities (blended, online, and face-to-face). When selecting classes, students must consider the modality that best matches their learning style. Students who select online courses must be highly organized, have strong time management skills, and be motivated and self-disciplined (resist the temptations of gaming, streaming, phone, bed, etc.). Generally, students are strongly encouraged to take face-to-face courses in the program's first semester.

Resources at the College
Students have full access to all college resources, including Academic Advising, Disability Services, Testing Center, Computer Lab, Fitness Center, Transfer Resources, clubs, etc. Students are encouraged to utilize the tutoring available at the college as needed before having trouble in class. EMC students are encouraged to join clubs and engage in the activities provided by the college.

Advising Meetings
As part of the EMC program, students are required to attend advising meetings. It is the responsibility of EMC students to adjust their schedules to attend these meetings. The MPS district EMC Coordinator will organize cohort meetings that happen four times per year. The MPS district EMC Coordinator will also meet individually with students/parents virtually by request (or if the student is on academic intervention.)

Accommodations/504
Students who qualify for either special education services (IEP) or a 504 plan are entitled to receive special education services or 504 accommodations in high school. Special education services apply only to K-12 schools. Colleges are not required to acknowledge special education services typically found in an IEP. Colleges do acknowledge 504 accommodation plans through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students who receive special education services in high school may apply for accommodation support in college classes through Section 504 laws. **It is important to note that each student must work with their college to request 504/IEP accommodations and services.** Staff at Midland Public Schools cannot apply for these services on behalf of the student. To apply for 504/IEP services and accommodations, students must initiate the process by contacting the Office of Disability Resources (or similarly named department) at their college. The college will need a copy of the student's current IEP or 504 plan. In some cases, a college may develop its own plan, and in others, it may implement the same plan. **Unlike high school, the student must initiate requests for accommodations and advocate with his/her professors each semester to receive these accommodations.** At most colleges, this needs to happen each semester a student is in attendance.

Class Scheduling
Scheduling of college classes for fall and winter semesters will take place with assistance from the MPS district EMC Coordinator and the college advisor. The MPS district EMC Coordinator and college advisor must approve all classes. Classes must be in a student's program of study. Due to the limited availability of college classes in the morning, EMC students are advised to schedule their college classes in the afternoon (12:30 or later start time). The high school schedule is not finalized for the fall until mid-August, when the high school schedule is released, students sometimes have to make choices or adjust their high school or college schedule so the two can work together seamlessly. High School courses are scheduled by the high school counselor. Any questions related to high school classes should be addressed directly to your high school counselor.

College Credit Load
In general, MPS has the following expectations about the number of credits a student will take per semester while enrolled in the program. We reserve the right to alter this based upon a student's readiness for more college coursework:

Grade 10 (only Delta program): 3 credits per semester

Grade 11: 6-7 college credits per semester

Grade 12: 9-11 college credits per semester

Grade 13: 12-14 college credits per semester

Academic Planning Information
For planning, all MPS students are expected to enroll in six high school classes to be considered full-time students. An Early Middle College student must have a combination that is equivalent to six classes in both high school and the postsecondary institution to be considered a full-time student. Refer to the table below for specifics. **In the senior year, a student must have at least one high school course, which for MPS will be Senior English,** as there are many critical items delivered to students in this class, such as the senior project, scholarship essay writing, resumes, application tips, etc. In the 5th year, no high school classes are required

Number of College Credits	Number of High School Classes Required
1-2	5
3	4
4-6	3
7	2
8-10	1

Dropping/Withdrawing From Classes
Once the Enrollment Authorization Form is submitted, students are not allowed to drop or withdraw from a class without contacting the MPS district EMC Coordinator and receiving approval. Any drop that occurs after the period for a 100% refund (typically the first 5 days of the semester) is considered a withdrawal and students will incur the cost of tuition, fees, and books for the class. Students withdrawing from a class will be placed on EMC academic intervention.

Note: If you are just changing the time of the class, you do not need approval from the MPS district EMC Coordinator.

Failing College Classes
If a student fails a college course, he or she will be placed on academic intervention, and the student will be required to repeat the failed college course the next available semester to improve their GPA and to be removed from academic intervention. In addition, many of the college classes students are taking fulfill high school graduation requirements. If you fail your college class that is required for high school graduation, the student will have to make up that high school credit before qualifying for either walking during the high school graduation ceremony during the 4th year or earning a high school diploma at the end of the 5th year. Depending on the course, this may mean repeating the course, attending summer school, or "doubling up" the following semester or school year to obtain the credit. For example, if you fail ENG 111 in the Fall, you will have to repeat ENG 111 in the Winter and then take ENG 112 in the Fall of your senior year in addition to a high school English class.

Please note: If a student fails or withdraws from a course (past established college deadlines), they will be required to reimburse MPS for the full cost of tuition, fees, and books.

Academic Intervention
Being part of the EMC program is a privilege, and students must meet the program's expectations to remain in the program. When students fail to meet these requirements, MPS will place students on academic intervention. A student will be placed on academic intervention if:

- the student's college semester GPA is below 2.0,
- the student fails one or more college courses or high school classes,
- the student withdraws from one or more college classes, and/or
- the student misses one or more advising meetings

If a student is placed on academic intervention, the student must develop a Plan of Action with the MPS district EMC coordinator.

Removal from Academic Intervention
To be removed from academic intervention, a student must complete his or her Plan of Action, earn an overall GPA of 2.0 or greater in the following college semester, and not fail or withdraw from any college classes or fail any high school courses.

Please note that each college has a separate system for students whose college GPA is below 2.0.

High School Graduation & Planning
The EMC Coordinator and your high school counselor will monitor your progress toward completing the Michigan Merit Curriculum and your high school diploma. For Davenport and Northwood, the programs are prescribed, and students must follow their five-year program plan. For Delta College, students have more flexibility in course selection. For Delta College, students need to select a program of study aligned with their post-secondary plans in collaboration with their Delta adviser and

follow that program. To preview the programs at Delta, click this link or enter this URL into your browser: https://www.delta.edu/programs/current/. Generally, one college semester course counts as .5 semester credit on the high school transcript. Any college course that is 5 credits or more will be awarded 1.0 high school credit per semester.

Each student has a digital EDP (Educational Development Plan) that contains all the requirements for both the high school and college diplomas. Students edit this document with the EMC Coordinator and the counselors.

EMC students participate in the graduation ceremony at their respective high school at the end of their senior year (4th year). However, they receive their diploma at the end of their 5th year. The graduation year on their diploma and on their high school transcript will reflect this 5th-year requirement.

All Early Middle College students must take at least one college-level math course (or math-related course) during their 5th year of high school or last year of the program. This is a state requirement regardless of how many math credits they previously earned. Each partner school has different classes that count towards this requirement.

Required State Testing for Graduation

Students are required to take the PSAT, SAT, MME, and ACT WorkKeys to graduate from high school. When these tests are scheduled, students must attend the MPS-assigned testing session, with no exceptions. Students must notify their professors in advance that they will be absent from their college classes because of required state testing.

Grades/Transcripts

All college courses are weighted at the .3 level for MPS GPA calculations and transcripts, regardless of the postsecondary institution.

However, students may earn .4 GPA weight upon successful completion of a designated Honors course at the college level. Students must meet the requirements of the college/university to participate in the Honors Program/Honors Project. To earn .4 honors level credit, the college course must be designated on the transcript as an Honors course. For more information about the Honors program, see either of the links below:

https://www.delta.edu/students/honors/index.html

https://www.delta.edu/students/honors/honors-option.html

Students enrolled at Davenport and Northwood may request that the district evaluate individual college courses for a .4 honors level based on a comparative relationship with traditional district courses. The request to evaluate a course must occur before the start of the semester of enrollment. Students must contact the MPS district EMC

Coordinator to facilitate this process a minimum of two weeks before the start of the college semester.

Students' grades will be recorded on their college transcript and may affect future enrollment, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities if grades earned are below 2.0. Be advised that these grades are permanent records for transcripts.

All college grades for MPS-funded courses will be recorded on your high school transcript, including withdrawals, and count towards the calculation of GPA. Courses that are paid for by the student will earn high school credit but do not count towards the calculation of GPA.

Remedial Courses
To the extent possible, MPS Early Middle College students will not take remedial courses at the college. If a student is placed in a college remedial course, the MPS district EMC Coordinator will develop a plan to improve the student's skills so they may be college-ready. In some cases, it may be in the best interest of the student to continue taking high school courses.

Pass/No Credit Grades
Some post-secondary partners offer students the ability to have their courses be Pass or No Credit instead of an A-F grade. P/NC grades are not part of the student's GPA calculation on their college transcript. However, the postsecondary partner supplies MPS with the letter grade, which will be posted to the high school transcript and used in high school GPA calculations. This option should not be used unless there are extenuating circumstances that you have discussed with your counselor and the MPS district EMC Coordinator.

Summer College Courses
Students who wish to take summer courses must self-pay. MPS does not provide sponsorship for summer courses. MPS sponsors students for 62 credits. When students self-pay for a course(s), that is not counted in the total MPS sponsorship.

Transferring Credits
It is the responsibility of the student to meet regularly with their college advisor and map out where they plan to transfer their credits. Parents/students should check with colleges they might want to attend to determine which college courses will transfer. It is a good idea to use the Michigan Transfer Agreement (MTA) at the beginning of the program. See this link for the MTA:

https://www.mitransfer.org/michigan-transfer-agreement

Withdrawing Before the 5th year
Students who are participating in the Early Middle College program are committing to stay for the fifth or 13th year of study. If a student decides that the program is not for them, then the student may exit the program after the current semester has concluded. Students **must** communicate this decision with the District EMC

Coordinator to formally leave the program. They would then graduate (provided all Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements have been met) at their previously scheduled time. They would forgo the option of having a 5th year of high school to complete more college coursework.

Upon exit, if the student has failed a course or earned a W (withdraw) or NC (No Credit) at the college, the student must reimburse MPS for the tuition, books, and fees of the course.

Specific Program Information

Financial Information
The Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act (PA160 of 1996) provides for enrollment payment from a school district's state aid foundation grant. The State has a formula that calculates the costs paid by the school district. Midland Public Schools pays college tuition and mandatory course fees, material fees, and registration fees required for enrollment in college courses that are required under the program. Sometimes, these costs exceed the prorated percentage of the statewide weighted average foundation allowance used by the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act. After this amount is exhausted, students/parents must pay the remaining costs. Please note that the foundation allowance is subject to change each year.

For example, if a student is taking one 3-credit course, we have around $800 dollars to cover tuition, fees, and books. Families would be responsible for any costs that exceed the amount we are allowed to pay.

Please note: If a student fails or withdraws from a course (past established college deadlines), they will be required to reimburse MPS for the full cost of tuition, fees, and books.

Athletics
Eligible students can participate in athletics with MPS if they meet district and MHSAA eligibility rules and requirements. Students should contact their athletic director at their respective school with specific questions on eligibility and other questions.

Under the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) rules, students are not eligible to participate in college athletics during grades 11 and 12. In addition, students are prohibited from participating in high school athletics during their 5th year of high school.

Starting in the fall of 2023, fifth-year early middle college students may participate in

collegiate athletics if they have completed all their high school graduation requirements, exhausted their high school athletic eligibility, and received written approval from the NJCAA before participation in NJCAA athletics. NJCAA student-athletes must be enrolled full-time at the college, which is 12 or more credits, and they are allowed two seasons of intercollegiate eligibility.

Students interested in participating in athletics at the collegiate level after their 5th year need to research how their college classes impact their eligibility. Student-athletes are encouraged to work with the EMC Coordinator, high school counselor, and athletic director to communicate with the colleges they are interested in attending. Visit http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future for more information.

School Calendar/ Inclement Weather
Students should follow local TV and radio stations for college or high school closures. Some colleges send notifications to students with weather delays/closures (but you must opt-in to receive notifications). If MPS is closed, it does **not** necessarily mean that the college campus is closed.

If your high school is not in session for any reason (spring break, ½ days for conferences, etc.), college courses still run, and students are expected to be in class. The college follows a different calendar from MPS, and students are expected to attend college classes when they are in session. This means that you likely won't get a full spring break free from work. MPS seldom lines up with the local colleges for spring break. You are responsible for completing the assigned work on each spring break.

Transportation
Students are responsible for ensuring that they have transportation to the college campus. They should also pay attention to the campus location when they register for classes, as many of our post-secondary partners offer classes in multiple locations throughout the region.

Communication
College faculty will communicate with students via their college email system. Students must frequently check their college email. Students must also send communications to their professors and other college faculty via their college email.

Privacy/FERPA at the College
EMC students are treated like traditional college students. Therefore, parents are not able to see academic progress, grades, financial information, etc. In addition, colleges will not discuss the EMC student's academic progress, course work, or schedule with the parent/guardian unless the student provides consent by filling out the appropriate paperwork at their respective partner school.

Parental Involvement
Although parents cannot see college/university attendance and grades through ParentVue, there are ways to monitor a student's progress. Every professor must post

grades to their student management systems, such as BrightSpace/D2L/Blackboard, which is the equivalent of MPS Synergy ParentVue/Canvas. It is suggested that parents have their child log in to the college grading system and show them their grades periodically.

Textbooks/Technology

Students should charge their textbooks to their college student accounts. This allows MPS to be invoiced for the textbooks. If a course requires a subscription to an online resource, the student may have to purchase the subscription on their own and submit their receipts for reimbursement to the MPS district EMC Coordinator. MPS can pay up to the state minimum; this typically covers tuition and books, but on occasion, some books may exceed the state minimum. If this occurs, the student would be responsible for the remaining balance.

MPS students will continue to be provided with a school-issued Chromebook through the thirteenth year. From time to time, students do encounter blocked sites. When this occurs, the student must enter a Midland Public Schools help ticket so the Instructional Technology Department can address the issue. In the ticket, include the district-wide EMC Coordinator's email: pelessla@midlandps.org

Students may use their own personal devices with college courses, but this is not required or encouraged.

Student ID Card

A college student ID card is issued to students when they enroll in college courses for the first time. EMC students are expected to carry their ID cards with them while on campus. They can use their card to enter most events on campus, the computer labs, and other student services.

Meet our Team

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Student Agreement Page

We have read the complete MPS Early Middle College handbook and understand all the rules and expectations. We understand the handbook may be amended during the year. Our signatures below acknowledge we agree to be responsible for following all the rules and expectations of the MPS EMC program, the postsecondary partner, as well as the Michigan Department of Education.

Any severe violation of the rules and expectations, which includes the local district's student handbook, may lead to dismissal from the EMC program. We understand that if the student is dismissed from the EMC program, the student may be responsible for any costs associated with tuition, fees, and/or books. We also understand that a dismissal from the program may jeopardize the timeline of a student's high school graduation; meaning the student may no longer be able to graduate with the student's original class.

Printed Name of EMC Student: _____

Signature of EMC Student:

_____ Date: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian:

_____Date: _____

Relationship: _____