

## **Description of the Model**

Middle College High School at Contra Costa College is an Early College High School program. Our purpose was to create, in collaboration with Contra Costa College (CCC), a nurturing and academically challenging environment for traditionally underserved students to reach their full potential in a non-traditional high school setting. An average of 300-400 students apply annually for approximately 75 spaces. MCHS/CCC faculty teams review applications. Each team looks for first generation college students and students whose potential will be better met in MCHS's program than in a traditional program. Our final enrollment is closely aligned with West Contra Costa Unified School District's demographics. Students are notified in early June of acceptance or non-acceptance into the program.

Beginning in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, students are taught high school curriculum by high school teachers in classrooms located on CCC's campus while being concurrently enrolled in up to 11 units of college classes. The high school students attend CCC classes along with students in the general college population and receive instruction in college-level transferable courses. By increasing exposure and access to college from an early age, our Early Middle College program is increasing the number of students who graduate from high school and go on to pursue post-secondary education. Over 60% of our students graduate with an AA degree and over 70% earn STEM certificates from CCC in addition to their high school diploma.

Our design gives students a special opportunity to gain a range of skills that will provide motivation and support for their lifelong personal, academic, and social growth. Our staff is dedicated to working collaboratively with the vision of continually enhancing the school program as a challenging, stimulating, caring, and supportive learning environment with high expectations for students who are able to meet the evolving demands of a global society. We are able to ensure the success of our program with the support of the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). The allocated LCAP funds we receive allows us to ensure the continued support of existing practices which enable our students to thrive in this unique and rigorous setting.

## **Implementation & Monitoring of the Model**

The program design at MCHS differentiates our school from other comprehensive high school programs in the district through an implementation that is aligned with the Middle College National Consortium four core principles of practice. These four core principles include: the high school and college collaboration, comprehensive academic support, college and Career Ready academic alignment and continuous organizational improvement.

### High School and College Collaboration

The collaboration between Middle College High School and Contra Costa College has been cordial and cohesive since 1989. The most important part of this collaboration is that the high school and college operate as a true team. The college faculty and administration have sought to make MCHS feel welcomed by fostering collaborative efforts between the two staff, by engaging in problem solving through the MCHS / CCC Advisory Board, by

including MCHS in collegiate processes and functions, and by providing MCHS with a “home” on campus. MCHS classes are dispersed through most college buildings, and MCHS students are involved in internships and jobs all over the campus. The students get a true college experience which boosts their motivation and success. Our students also have the opportunity to participate in college leadership, college clubs, ASU senates and serve on the Contra Costa College County District governing board.

### Comprehensive Academic Support

MCHS is committed to enabling all students to attain high standards. This model is a combination of challenge and support that fosters growth in every student. Students receive academic assistance along with social and emotional reinforcement. Furthermore, students receive college organizational skills and college and career readiness aid.

To help students succeed in their coursework and the transition to college, MCHS provides a variety of support, including advisories, tutoring, and academic support classes. Before and after-school tutoring is available for students who are struggling. The tutoring program includes one-on-one assistance before and after school for students struggling in high school and college courses. Early College (EC) Seminars provide additional discipline-specific support for students enrolled in more challenging college courses, particularly in math and science. Also, EC Seminars provide extra support and are offered to all students as a buffer in college classes. On average, 20-30 students attend tutoring Monday-Thursday after school.

College and career readiness is a major emphasis at MCHS. Students follow an Education Plan that maps out what classes they will be taking all four years at MCHS. For example, in 9th grade, students are enrolled in four high school classes and two college courses. Students also have the opportunity to meet with a college counselor to go over their post-secondary plan. We also provide continued support through a 5th year study option, in which students have the opportunity to borrow books and receive supplemental support, like tutoring, throughout their 5<sup>th</sup> year at the college for students who may need an additional year to complete their AA requirements.

### College and Career Academic Alignment

MCHS engages students in a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, promoting active intellectual inquiry. We expect all students will have successfully completed a substantial number of transferable college courses which are equivalent to the potential credits earned through advanced placement and honors courses offered by traditional high schools. As students move towards college readiness, they are developing literacy, numeracy, and 21st Century skills.

The high school curriculum at MCHS is designed to ensure that all students have completed University of California “A-G” admission requirements by the end of senior year. Beyond the college preparatory curriculum, MCHS offers courses that are aligned with the University of California system’s requirements and a number of these courses earn college credit. These concurrent enrollment courses also fulfill high school graduation requirements and satisfy lower-division requirements at California State Universities if a student receives a grade of “C-” or better.

EC Seminars are support classes created to prepare students for success on various standardized assessments and in rigorous college courses. They are structured as small sized classes with a lead teacher and peer tutors to work with students in their specific subject areas of need.

Integration of technology throughout the curriculum is used by teachers to ensure engagement and understanding of content material. MCHS has utilized a one-to-one tablet program where students use tablets for research, to access textbooks and to navigate online coursework in Canvas, Blackboard, and other LMSs for both college and high school classes since 2014.

### Continuous Organizational Improvement

Our staff is dedicated and committed to continually providing a challenging, stimulating, caring, and supportive learning environment with high expectations for all students. To ensure sustainability, our teachers participate in ongoing collaborative work, professional development and use student data to drive their decision making. They conduct a survey with students, parents and among themselves semi-annually to reflect on the effectiveness of their work and seek areas for growth.

### **Results of the Model/Pupil Outcomes**

The Early College high school program at MCHS has achieved significant positive results and recognitions. We were recognized by the U.S. News and World Report as a best school in America in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, and 2014-2018. In 2011, Middle College High School graduated two Gates Millennium Scholars and one more in 2016. We also received the Gold Ribbon Award in 2017.

Data reveals that students who attend MCHS exhibit better attendance rates, higher graduation rates, greater completion of UC/CSU eligibility criteria, earn simultaneous AA degrees and successfully matriculate to bachelor's and master's programs.

To ensure that our high school students are achieving and on the right track, the administrator, counselor and teachers monitor student's progress and program success using various strategies; transcript analysis and evaluation, Local Review Board, ILT and staff meetings.

Transcript analysis is an ongoing process used by the counselor to monitor and track student and program success. The counselor meets with the student and evaluates their progress to make sure they are meeting A-G requirements. This tool is also used as an informative measure to assist with creating the master schedule and choosing appropriate college courses for a student's abilities.

Local Review Board data provides the opportunity for teachers, parents and students to monitor individual student success and challenges. This process allows us to monitor each student's grades and create individualized interventions and facilitates communication between students, families and teachers on an as needed basis.

MCHS has a small staff of thirteen who meet twice a month as a whole, once for staff meetings and once as an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) to review data and plan

program changes to remain in compliance with district and state initiatives. Informal collaborations also happen frequently between cohorts and cross-curricular teachers.

The model is built to provide support for first-generation college bound students. Our success rates can be seen through MCHS attendance which is consistent, remaining near ninety eight percent. Ninety-nine percent of MCHS students graduated from high school in 2017-18 which was eighteen percent above WCCUSD graduation data. MCHS's percentage of students meeting the A-G requirements for college entrance is close to twice that of the number of students meeting the same requirements in the district or in the state.

MCHS has had successes on several fronts. An increased focus on student assessment and implementing targeted interventions have helped the school and students pinpoint what we need to do to be successful. MCHS uses data from sources that are internal and external. Nationwide: SBAC, PSAT, and SAT. Statewide CSU/UC EAP, Youth Truth, and MESA. Districtwide benchmarks and technology surveys. Site based resources include teacher and publisher created assessment along with semi-annual internal surveys of students, families and staff. The use of all of these assessments has also helped Middle College to identify and monitor individual students' ability levels.