

Early College Promise (ECP) Pilot Program (limited pilot)

About

Massachusetts Early College Promise (ECP) Pilot Program (sometimes referred to “13th year” or a “5th year” of high school) is a one-year extension of [Designated Early College Programming in MA](#). The ECP Pilot Program deepens the grades 9-12 Early College offerings and expands opportunity for students to earn a full Associate degree or 60 transferable credits towards a Bachelor's degree at no cost to the student. Continuation of strong high school supports for students is integral to ECP Pilot Programming. ECP Pilot Programming is intentionally designed to empower students traditionally underserved by higher education. Current ECP programs are located in majority economically disadvantaged districts and intentionally focus on expanding Early College access and success among Black and Latinx students while simultaneously providing proactive support for students whose college prospects are affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Policy Summary:

In order to have qualified for the Early College Promise 5th Year limited Pilot Program, Early College programs had to meet all of the following criteria:

- A one-year **extension of Designated Early College** programming in MA (a “5th year” of high school for students who opt in)
- Continuation of strong **high school supports** for students while enrolling in a significant load of **college coursework**
- Enables students to earn a full **associate degree or 60 transferable credits** towards a Bachelor's degree at no cost to them
- Requires **deepening the program’s 9-12 Early College offering** in order to reach such deep levels of credit accumulation
- ECP programs must be located in districts that are majority economically disadvantaged.

ECP Pilot Program Participating Districts

ECP Pilot Program District	College Partner(s)
Springfield Public School District	Springfield Technical Community College Worcester State University
Lawrence Public School District	Northern Essex Community College
Lynn Public School District	Salem State University
Lowell Public School District	Middlesex Community College
New Heights Charter School of Brockton	Massasoit Community College
Salem Public School District	North Shore Community College
Haverhill Public School District	Northern Essex Community College

Note: This is a limited pilot. Designated early college programs interested in starting a pilot 5th year program must reach out to the Early College Office at DESE to discuss participation.

Pilot Process and Timeline

Conducting pilots allows us to test innovations on a small scale, ensuring outcomes and working through challenges, before implementing more broadly. The following timeline applies to the ECP Pilot Program goals and evaluation:

- **Define Pilot, Fall 2021**
 - Set guidelines for participation
 - Define design parameters
- **Implement Pilot, FY22-FY24**
 - Identify and solve challenges
 - Define performance criteria (Fall 2022)
- **Begin Pilot Evaluation, Summer 2024**
 - Evaluate pilot results against earlier-determined criteria
- **Determine Path Forward, Fall 2024**
 - End pilot (as of FY26)
 - Modify and pilot again
 - Implement in small scale
 - Implement broadly