

Early College Studies @ Stamford High School Frequently Asked Questions

What is Early College Studies at Stamford High School (ECS @ SHS)?

Early College Studies at Stamford High School is a collaboration between Stamford Public Schools, Norwalk Community College, Stamford Public Education Foundation, Beyond Limits, The Connecticut State Department of Education and other public partners. The program is based on the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) model, an innovative merging of high school and college curriculum. In four, five or six years, students earn a high school diploma, and can earn also an associate degree. Additionally, they learn the skills and get the experience they need to step seamlessly into available, well-paying jobs in the Information Technology (IT) industry.

ECS@SHS is a specialized program that is only available to Stamford Public School students. ECS@SHS is part of the Stamford Public School system, open to all Stamford students. In 2017-2018, ECS@SHS's inaugural year, up to 50 students will be accepted into the freshmen class, and up to 50 students will continue to be accepted for subsequent years.

How does ECS@SHS work?

Grade 9 students will begin a four to six-year program designed for participants to advance through high school and college coursework. In addition to a high school diploma, students who complete the program will earn an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree awarded by the school's college partner, Norwalk Community College.

Alongside regular core high school courses such as English and Social Sciences, there will be a focus on mastery of STEM skills (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). There will also be an emphasis on the "soft" skills of presentation, self-marketing and communication that are essential to success in the workplace. Industry partners will provide identification of minimum requirements for entry-level IT jobs, and these, too, will be integrated into the curriculum.

Additionally, students will participate in a Workplace Learning curriculum to gain the experience needed to work in technology in a corporate setting. All students will be matched with a mentor from a local company. Students will participate in project-based learning activities and workplace visits, hear guest speakers, and tackle skills-based, real-world projects through internships and apprenticeships.

Why is it beneficial to attend this type of school?

The world and the job market are changing. Today's jobs especially require more technology-based skills. Many positions require less than a four-year degree, but more than a high school diploma. According to projections by the [Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University](#), "65% of all jobs in the economy will require postsecondary education and training beyond high school." On average, workers with an associate's degree will earn 73% more than those with only a high school diploma.

ECS@SHS allows students who may not have thought about college, may be the first in their family to consider it, or who may not be able to afford college, to earn an associate degree and a real opportunity at a good job after graduating. With a high school diploma and associate degree at graduation, they are prepared to join the workforce, or continue on to earn a four-year or advanced degree.

What types of classes will be offered?

All ECS@SHS students will take core high school courses in English, science, mathematics, and the arts. In addition, students work toward an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree. Students have the option of two degree tracks, focusing in either mobile programming or software engineering technology.

What kind of jobs can students get after graduating?

Students who earn one of the two AAS degrees are prepared for entry level careers in computer programming, database programming and administration, web programming, and systems/network administration and support. Students also get a foundation in the field of computer systems that will let them transition into a Bachelor of Technology in Computer Systems program, if they desire. Furthermore, these AAS options prepare competent technicians who have the skills needed by the computer industry. Graduates qualify for occupations such as field engineer, computer-repair technician, business machines technician, data processing equipment specialist, electromechanical technician, laboratory technician, production assembly technician, biomedical instruments service technician, and robotics service technician. Manufacturers and users of computers and electromechanical equipment are potential employers.

Are all of the college credits earned transferable?

Norwalk Community College does not guarantee the transferability of credits to another school, college, or university. Any decision on the comparability, appropriateness and

applicability of credit and whether credit should be accepted is the decision of the receiving institution.

Who is eligible to attend?

Any middle school student in the Stamford Public School system is eligible to apply. Middle school guidance counselors will also recommend ECS@SHS to students who may benefit from this program.

Applicants will be chosen through a process that includes an essay, recommendations from guidance counselors and teachers, an interview and a FAFSA eligibility form.

How do students apply?

The application is posted online for downloading on the Stamford High School website, www.stamfordhigh.org. Guidance counselors at all Stamford middle schools will have print applications available if necessary. The application deadline for the first year class is May 7, 2017.

The admissions committee will review each student's application and then determine a second round of students to invite to an in-person interview.

Interviews will be scheduled for May 11 - May 16, 2017 and admissions decisions will be announced by May 26, 2017.