

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Patrick Arguelles

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Career Enrichment Center & Early College Academy Magnet High School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 807 Mountain Road NE

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Albuquerque City                      NM State                      87102-2441 Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Bernalillo

Telephone (505) 247-3658

Fax (505) 848-9421

Web site/URL https://cec.aps.edu

E-mail arguelles@aps.edu

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Ms. Raquel Reedy

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail reedy@aps.edu

District Name Albuquerque Public Schools District Tel. (505) 880-3700

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Dr. David Percy

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
  - 99 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 29 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 37 High schools
  - 5 K-12 schools

170 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
  - Urban or large central city
  - Suburban
  - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	28	25	53
10	22	29	51
11	25	22	47
12 or higher	26	21	47
<b>Total Students</b>	101	97	198

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 4 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 8 % Asian
  - 6 % Black or African American
  - 45 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 28 % White
  - 9 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 4%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	3
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	4
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	7
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	194
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.04
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	4

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %  
8 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Spanish, Chinese, Arabic

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 31 %  
Total number students who qualify: 61

8. Students receiving special education services: 45 %  
90 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>44</u> Autism                 | <u>21</u> Multiple Disabilities                |
| <u>2</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>14</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>38</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>7</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment         |
| <u>2</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 6
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	24
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	2
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	95%	94%	96%
High school graduation rate	90%	92%	89%	92%	96%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	45
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	21%
Enrolled in a community college	18%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	4%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	2%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Every Student. Every Day. Career Ready. College Bound. Early College Academy/Career Enrichment Center blends strong academic, career, and technical curriculum, and advanced dual credit learning, to enhance the education of its students.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

For the Early College Academy, students are selected through a lottery process. Names are chosen randomly in a video-taped process. 62 incoming 9th grade students were selected in 2017-2018 and 65 were selected in 2018-2019. For upcoming school year 2019-2020 58 incoming 9th grade students were selected.

For Career Enrichment Center, each class or department chooses from applications submitted on-line. Each program varies depending on need and availability. Early College Academy students are given preference for CEC classes. ECA teachers review and discuss each ECA student to determine best placement options for student success. Teachers at both ECA and CEC review transcripts and measure students based on class-specific criteria to select or place their students.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Early College Academy (ECA) is a college-preparatory magnet high school in its 13th year that focuses on college preparation. ECA has been designated by the NM Public Education Department as an Early College High School and is one of 8 high schools in the state with this designation. Career Enrichment Center (CEC) is in its 43rd year and provides in-depth career exploration for a wide variety of students from all geographic areas and socioeconomic groups in the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) district. Students attending ECA are given priority in the selection process for CEC classes. CEC's programs meet the needs of students with exceptional potential, motivation, or specialized interests - college-readiness, career exploration, career preparation, internships, dual enrollment, and leadership development are integral components of ECA/CEC's curriculum and course offerings.

ECA's small-school environment offers students an intimate and personalized college-readiness learning experience and connects students to high-skill/high-wage careers through dual enrollment in college courses. We believe in an academic focus, paralleling a college-level curriculum and dual enrollment is the centerpiece strategy to improve college access and the successful transition of students from secondary to post-secondary education.

ECA's distinctive focus on early college preparation attracts a wide variety of students from all geographic areas and socioeconomic groups in Albuquerque. ECA in partnership with APS Transportation provides busing services that transport any participating students from all geographic locations in the city. Students are picked up and dropped off at all of APS's comprehensive high schools so ALL students in APS can benefit by what is offered. Students in ECA have a wide variety of courses to select from and these courses are offered on our campus from 6:30am to 5:30pm daily in a variety of career areas. The blending of strong academic, career and technical classes and dual credit opportunities enables our students to acquire 21st century skills to be successful in today's market.

Through an explicit, school-wide focus on social emotional learning, ECA/CEC Administration leverages psychological, social and emotional aspects of education to instruct and empower students. From developing perseverance and a growth mindset, to fostering student belonging and inclusion, to engaging in collaboration and perspective-taking skills, these psychological resources are critical to student success and to a 21st century education. We focus on the whole child, and prepare our students to be socially aware, skilled, and responsible, and we provide students with the social, emotional and academic resources they need to belong and succeed in a highly effective college preparatory environment.

In addition, ECA Administration works hard to provide a school culture that encourages parent participation in the student's education. We are in constant communication with parents and students through Schoolmessenger and by email or phone. We strive to make ourselves available to answer the tough questions and to partner with our community leaders to provide the city with a viable potential employee pipeline with the social skills and academic background necessary to be employable.

ECA/CEC offers numerous programs that can assist students in launching a career before leaving high school. ECA students can enroll in our Nursing programs/classes. They culminate with either a LPN license (5 semester program) or certification through our Certified Nursing Assistant program (CNA is 1 full year) for successful students. We also offer multi-level Automotive classes as part of a one to three-year program of study that culminates in ASE and NATEF certification in several areas and dual credit through CNM. ECA students can chose from Pre-medical or Veterinary classes with advanced medical knowledge taught by certified medical personnel and medical doctors. Students can select to participate in Cosmetology classes, available in one to three-year programs of study, culminating in hours toward certification or dual credit (credit for prior learning) through CNM. ECA offers an extensive repertoire of World Languages not typically available in most schools that can culminate with the awarding of a Bilingual Seal (Japanese, Chinese (UNM Dual Credit), French (CNM Dual Credit), German, Navajo (IAIA Dual Credit), Zuni (IAIA Dual Credit), Spanish (CNM Dual Credit). ECA's successful math programs include a rigorous AP Calculus BC offering allowing students the opportunity to test out of multiple college math classes. A Dual Credit Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Cadet program that certifies students in 1st Responder, Wild Land Fire

Management and EMS Basic training (UNM, 10 credits; CNM, 19 credits) allows ECA students to be trained paramedics upon graduation and employable through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Albuquerque Fire Rescue (AFR) for immediate employment. Forensic Science classes with college-level instruction gives students a realistic exposure to a forensic lab. ECA is also the top performing school in STEM related academic areas and we have available various computer programming and robotics classes that teach students the languages, programs, and nuts and bolts of technological innovation, many culminating in certifications required in a 21st century work environment.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

#### **1a. Reading/English language arts:**

ECA/CEC recognizes that to succeed in the 21st century, students need to perform to high standards and acquire mastery of rigorous core subject material. Students also will need to gain cognitive and social skills that enable them to deal with the complex challenges of today's societal requirements. We rigorously incorporate Common Core State Standards (CCSS) into curriculum to encapsulate academic core curriculum mastery and the 4Cs (Collaboration, Communication, Critical thinking/problem solving, Creativity/innovation).

The real purpose of reading is to get meaning from text, and the purpose of writing is to convey meaning with text. Best Practices in Reading at ECA/CEC include: focus on meaning; surround readers with opportunities for success; teach reading as thinking; engage in close reading experiences and practice text annotation; replace workbooks and skills sheets with authentic activities; and provide writing experiences in all content areas.

ECA/CEC's focus in writing is to prepare students for college level work and/or be able to write as part of a 21st century workforce. We instruct students on planning, revising and editing compositions; teach grammar and mechanics in the context of actual writing; have students write collaboratively; provide opportunities for students to experience the complete writing process; use writing for learning content; help students find real purposes to write and real audiences to reach; use writing to support learning throughout the curriculum; and use evaluation constructively and efficiently.

We provide differentiated instruction based on assessment results and adapt instruction to meet students' needs. Summative Assessments include end-of-unit, midterm, and end-of-course exams, and all ECA students are required to show a project or portfolio of cumulative work in the Spring semester. Formative assessment is more diagnostic than evaluative and is used to monitor learning style and ability and provide ongoing feedback to students. Examples include exit tickets, Socratic seminar, jigsawing a content-specific reading passage, or crowd sourcing a presentation.

We monitor student progress regularly and reteach as necessary. We write to persuade, to report, and to describe. Our students communicate effectively through exposition, analysis, and argumentation to achieve sufficient richness and complexity for effective communication.

#### **1b. Mathematics:**

At ECA/CEC students will learn and achieve high mathematical standards as a result of effective teaching. Our professional instructors provide access to a standards-based curriculum (CCSS) and research-based instruction as the base to build expectations on for all students. ECA/CEC emphasizes life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, information, media and technology skills and core curriculum and 21st century themes. We recognize that the most powerful predictor of student achievement is guaranteed and viable curriculum, defined here as high level academic material but also the opportunity to learn and time spent teaching the content. This opportunity to learn is the most powerful predictor of student achievement.

ECA/CEC has consistently maintained the highest test scores in Math across the state for PARCC and ACT and has the highest ACT STEM scores in NM for five consecutive years. Proficiency in mathematics prepares our students for work in career fields, but also for the reasoning, questioning and problem solving skills necessary for college and career readiness. We strive to provide procedural knowledge and skill development and problem solving is the basis of instruction. All students are taught to understand the meaning behind mathematical operations and to justify their thinking. We build understanding of mathematical concepts in geometry and reasoning algebraically by using real world, authentic contexts that are inherently meaningful to students.

Instructors use assessment that provides an understanding of what students know and guides meaningful decisions about teaching and learning activities. Summative assessments include end-of-unit tests, midterms and finals. Formative assessments include the use of mini-white boards, TInspire clickers, cold-calling (using higher order questions – DOK 3 & 4s, and oral demonstrations. Deductive reasoning is at the core of most math classes and upper level mathematics classes use a transformational approach. The level of instruction/curriculum for Algebra I and Geometry focuses on preparing students for Dual Credit and higher level AP Math courses.

### **1c. Science:**

The Science curriculum and instruction at ECA/CEC provides all students an authentic understanding of scientific knowledge and processes, and teaches students to be critical thinkers. Rigorous and relevant instruction presents projects and problems that are related to context so our science curriculum drives instruction where learning is achieved through the use of inquiry, the acquisition of content, experimentation, reflection, and the use of current technology. We believe that students experiencing a problem in context will make connections and see the value in what they are learning. This type of learning is vital because students will apply what they know to new situations, enabling them to make informed decisions and better prepare them to be college and career ready.

Academic rigor at ECA/CEC is learning in which students demonstrate a thorough, in-depth mastery of challenging tasks to develop cognitive skills through reflective thought, analysis, problem-solving, evaluation, or creativity. Relevance occurs when students apply core knowledge, concepts, or skills to solve real-world problems.

The science department at ECA/CEC creates interdisciplinary and contextually relevant learning through authentic problems or tasks, simulation, or connecting concepts to current issues. Inquiry-based learning is taught through hands on investigations in the classroom and in the lab. Summative assessments include end-of-unit tests, midterms and finals. Formative assessments include extension projects, oral interviews/oral defenses, exit slips, and the use of google docs and google forms to post individual and group work. ECA/CEC's standards-based system of science education is horizontally coherent and works together to support students' development of the knowledge and understanding of science. Focus is on knowing, using, and interpreting scientific explanations; generating and evaluating scientific evidence and explanations; understanding the nature and development of scientific knowledge; and participating productively in scientific practices and discourse. Our system is also vertically coherent – we have a shared understanding at all levels of science education and for the curriculum (class, school, district, state, and national) and we have consensus about the purposes and uses of assessment.

### **1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Student-centered Best Practice Principles for all content areas at ECA must go through our Social Studies department. Our focus is on activating students' innate intrinsic motivation to learn by providing authentic real and complex ideas and materials coupled with experiential active, hands-on concrete experiences. The genuine challenges, choices, and student responsibility embedded in each course from NM, World and US History to Business Law, Navajo History/Government, Ethnic Studies and others produces powerful cognitive learning and higher-order thinking. These ECA/CEC classes build knowledge through inquiry and collaboration with peers. Classes are collaborative in nature and inquiry is the basis of all learning at ECA/CEC. Classrooms center their study around essential questions, progress-monitoring, opportunities to reflect and lively conversation, discussion and debate.

Social Studies skills instruction focuses on writing (interactive note booking, annotation, and Cornell note taking skills); reading in the content area; and involving students in both independent inquiry and collaborative learning. Students are expected to achieve a greater depth of understanding through thoughtful discussion and reading in preparation for the demands of dual credit classes and career exploration. Assessments include graphic organizers, daily quizzes, extension projects and metacognition (What did we do? Why did we do it? What did I learn? How can I apply it?)

Instructors make learning relevant by placing rigorous academics within the context of issues and problems from the real world. Using essential question frameworks, instructors help students meet core standards through inquiry and integration of multiple disciplines; modeling metacognition; supporting meaningful differentiation; and providing transparency. Instructors collaborate across content areas to provide more intellectually engaging intra- and interdisciplinary lessons that support the educational goals of the school.

### **1e. For secondary schools:**

The transition from high school to college or workplace is a significant time for students and preparation for this endeavor is critical. At ECA/CEC we start from day one of school to prepare students. As they progress through our many AP, dual credit or certification opportunities, students are in constant preparation for post-secondary life.

We establish rigorous, relevant career pathways driven by workplace opportunities; we close the gap between career pathways and workforce opportunities; we identify technical and workplace readiness standards and assessments; we offer career pathways in settings that accelerate post-secondary attainment and career advancement; we create a guidance system of career information, exploration and advisement; we increase access to high-quality work-based learning experiences; and we attract, prepare and retain high-quality career pathway teachers.

### **1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:**

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

As an APS magnet school, ECA provides to its students hands-on 21st century elective courses from beginning to advanced-level work, each with in-depth career focused learning. Students take their core classes as quickly as possible so that they can choose unique courses from a wide-range of career areas, including courses in Medicine (Vet-Med or Pre-Med), Digital Film and Audio, 2D and 3D Animation, Computer Applications, Web Scripting, Engineering/Robotics, Computer-Aided Drafting for Engineers and Architects, Computer Science, Business and Finance, Forensic Sciences, Languages, and Trades. Also available to students are internship classes and a wide range of languages, including dual credit classes like Chinese, French, Spanish, Navajo and Zuni language, or other languages like German, Japanese or Arabic. Students have several dual credit Art classes (2D Drawing, Perspective) offered through the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA). They also take their core classes in Health, Nutrition and Physical Education during their freshman year but are encouraged to take additional offerings in those subject areas as dual credit in subsequent years. We have a full slate of career technical education courses, many for dual credit, including Automotive Technologies, Cosmetology, Emergency Medical Response, Certified Nursing Assistant, Police Service Aide, as well as a nationally accredited LPN Program. Additionally, students are encouraged to take Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) and University of New Mexico (UNM) dual-credit courses, some of which are integrated into CEC course offerings. We are teaching tomorrow's leaders: nurses, EMTs, engineers, doctors, computer programmers, policemen, fire fighters, hair stylists, animators, architects, construction foremen, filmmakers, mechanics, builders, physicists, interpreters, accountants, bankers, entrepreneurs, veterinarians, astronomers, researchers . . . and more.

ECA freshmen come from many diverse learning backgrounds (in the last three years the 50+ 9th graders selected in the lottery have come from 31, 29, and 32 schools respectively) so we spend the majority of their freshman year providing them with the soft skills and college and career readiness skills necessary to be successful in life. By their junior year at ECA they are immersed in college level classes and/or in career pathways. There's tremendous power in establishing partnerships between schools and families and local community organizations, especially with the school's focus on college and career readiness. We provide our community partners with enthusiastic interns, apprentices and volunteers, all of them ready to engage in authentic educational and work experiences. We teach them that they can affect their communities in positive ways. We ask that our partners engage our students in real world, meaningful work. School Leadership works hard to develop a shared vision with our partners that will help all of us as a team work

together toward mutual success.

Learning in mathematics, science, engineering and technology in inter-connected ways increasingly enables students to become thinkers, problem solvers and innovators in any classroom and career field. We provide intensive professional development for our staff in Differentiated Instruction, Higher Order Thinking Skills and Depth of Knowledge Questioning as a means to achieving career and college readiness for all students.

### **3. Special Populations:**

All young adults with disabilities are entitled to a free and appropriate education and/or services that lead to an adult life characterized by satisfying relations with others, independent living, productive engagement in the community, and participation in society at large. ECA serves to achieve such outcomes for many of our students by providing a rich variety of educational and vocational program options and experiences. Every child in New Mexico has diverse strengths rooted in his or her family's unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances. At ECA, our ultimate responsibility is to prepare ALL students for meaningful post-secondary opportunities including post-secondary education, meaningful employment, lifelong learning, and roles as contributing members of communities. Students with disabilities, like their peers, aspire to take part in a wide range of activities as they leave high school and enter adult life. Our instructors embrace every student, regardless of background or zip code. Each is capable of achieving at the highest levels and it is clear that a well-coordinated effort that begins in middle school and proceeds persistently and systematically through senior year in high school is paramount.

Currently 39% of the students enrolled in the Early College Academy for 2018-2019 had IEPs. That number is significantly greater than the 6% of students with IEPs registered in 2012-2013. We have also changed the demographics of our school and have more closely aligned with the demographics of the state and district. Students at ECA are chosen through a lottery process so we used recruiting as our way of allowing for greater diversity of student population. We recruit heavily in APS schools with higher Free and Reduced Lunch-eligible populations. Middle schools designated by the NM Public Education Department as requiring Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) receive additional recruitment team attention to inform parents and students of options regarding attendance at ECA. This is done with email and phone messages through schoolmessenger, personal visits to school assemblies and AVID classes, and a renewed effort to reach out to counselors, teachers and administration at each school. We also participate in a number of School Choice Fairs and other recruitment events. In addition, we are committed to the identification and service of special education students in the least restrictive environment possible. We reach out to every special education department at every middle and high school to work together on selecting students for our programs that we believe can be successful. Instructors familiarize themselves with student IEPs and transition plans appropriately for each student. We make an accurate and thoughtful assessment of a student's abilities and interests. We set clear, measurable goals related to his/her postsecondary aspirations and then provide appropriate support and services to help them achieve their goals. We promote and encourage student achievement, inclusion, access, high expectations, and an authentic identity among students so they understand themselves and can make a positive contribution to the world around them.

We provide many opportunities for our struggling students to receive individual tutoring services or other available academic intercessions. We provide Lunch Support for Academics, a free tutoring service conducted by most teachers in ECA to help students during the lunch period, and Peer Tutoring conducted by members of ECA's Key Club and National Honor Society. We also have the most comprehensive ACT Preparatory classes in the state, and the results speak for themselves – ECA is the top performing public school in NM in regard to ACT and ACT-STEM scores in the state.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

It takes a village to raise a child. And it takes an entire team of parents, staff, administration and community to raise a successful student. Our focus on social and emotional learning allows us to embrace a positive school culture and climate and create a safe, orderly, supportive environment conducive to learning. We strive to create a caring school community, teach appropriate behavior and social problem solving skills, implement positive behavior support and provide rigorous academic instruction.

We greet students in the parking lot, by the front doors, in the classroom hallways, outside of the building – always with a smile and a greeting. By establishing a school climate that consistently and continually affirms the worth and diversity of all students we know that students will perform at high levels of learning. We work to ensure that all students experience opportunities for personal success, often by embracing Social-Emotional Learning as a tool.

School is no longer solely about the three R's. The classroom has become a place that serves to support a student's holistic growth — mind, body, and heart. We work to embed social-emotional learning into their classrooms and curriculum - students and staff learn to be mindful of emotions, challenges, stresses, and traumas and make room for academic learning. One focus of our 90 Day Plan is to use our SEL program to promote academic achievement and positive social behavior, and to reduce behavior problems and emotional pain. Our Wellness team provides professional development and support in five areas of social-emotional learning. Self-awareness is being able to recognize and comprehend one's emotions and how they translate into our behaviors. Self-management goes one step further and helps us manage anger and stress. Social awareness helps us understand and respect the uniqueness of the people around us, and we work diligently to teach our students cooperation, active listening, conflict resolution and communication skills. As a staff we have identified the essential social skills we want our students to have to make them employable in a 21st century workforce and go about every day emphasizing them.

ECA students nominate Staff of the Month, and winners are posted on the Staff of the Month lighted board, receive t-shirts and prizes, and are announced multiple times during announcements. We also have monthly pot lucks and cake to celebrate birthdays. The School Wellness team works to provide staff with tips and time to walk or use PE equipment to improve health. We also do a lot of team building during professional development in August and January and also during Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

At ECA we encourage parents to be active participants in their student's education. We meet with every student and parents prior to them starting their first year at ECA and we line out our expectations for both student and parents and have them sign off they understand them. Most of our discussion centers around social skills and other skills necessary to be part of any workforce. We discuss attendance and punctuality and emphasize positive participation in classroom activities. We encourage active participation by the student in extracurricular activities. We ask parents to stay informed and we talk about the many ways we communicate with parents (e-mails, schoolmessenger, text, phone calls, parentvue. Etc.). We ask parents to participate in Open Houses, Parent Nights, Student-led Conferences and any other social events we have at school, including dances and game nights. We expect parents to supervise nightly study (2-3 hours per night) and support healthy habits such as good nutrition and quality rest.

ECA has a highly efficient, collaborative, and organized Parent Association that supports site-level programs and responds to essential needs of our students and campus. We also offer numerous programs that can assist students in launching a career before leaving high school and have partnered with many different community members to create internship, apprenticeship and mentorship opportunities for our students. We have a Job Mentorship Program through the City of Albuquerque that pays students to work; we have multiple MOUs with various organizations, including Albuquerque Fire Rescue, APD, Albuquerque Ambulance, various Senior Living homes, various Automotive shops around the city, Sandia

National Labs, several smaller tech companies and several Cosmetology and Barber Schools in the metro area, to name a few.

ECA students take elective classes that blend strong academic, career, and technical curriculum to enhance their education. A key component to their success is that APS provides transportation for any participating student from any of APS's comprehensive high schools to and from ECA at four different times throughout the day. Transportation is one of the biggest factors in our ability to recruit students from all over Albuquerque and giving all metro students the opportunity to attend one of NM's few designated Early College High School's and the top College and Career Readiness Center in the state.

### **3. Professional Development:**

All professional development provided to instructors at ECA/CEC are based around the successful implementation of college and career readiness skills in each of our students. Our vision speaks to what we do daily: every student, every day, career ready, college bound. Using Harvard Datawise Protocols for meetings and professional development and providing instructors with some training on AVID and Read180 strategies and tenets, we work on 3 specific areas of professional development. Regardless of subject/content area, we have focused our PD to address four areas of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) based on intensely studying PARCC results for both ECA and CEC.

Critical thinking, creativity, innovation and information literacy are all habits of mind evident in the CCSS we have focused on for our school 90 Day Plan. These habits of mind are central to the teaching and learning of not only our core academic areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Sciences, but our exceptional selection of electives and dual credit offerings in many of the career clusters we have available to students.

ECA/CEC Administration ensures that the duration of professional development is significant and ongoing to allow time for teachers to learn new strategies and implement with fidelity. The nature of our classes and the expanded life experiences but limited teaching experiences of many of our instructors requires that our professional development address discipline-specific concepts and skills that will allow instructors to both improve teacher practice and student learning.

It is evident that professional development for our instructors has been successful because they are able to use content-specific assessments to provide data that informs instruction and guides practice. Teacher collaboration coupled with targeted professional development has provided an excellent step forward in the integration of critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning and proof, communication, representation, and connections in the teaching and learning of content-specific material in our core content ECA classes and all of our CEC elective classes. We continue to focus additional efforts on career readiness standards including adaptive reasoning, strategic competence, conceptual understanding, procedural fluency and productive disposition as we prepare our students to be part of our 21st century workforce.

NM Common Core State Standards, NextGen Science Standards and College and Career Readiness Standards guide all instruction at ECA and CEC. As part of our 90 day Plan we have identified specific areas of ELA and Math that all content areas can focus on to improve the college and career readiness skills in our students.

### **4. School Leadership:**

Articulating a vision that connects the purpose of our school to the stakeholders we serve is just one of many ways we insure positive student performance. School leaders are powerful drivers of student outcomes, but we also have the potential to affect the teachers and staff we aspire to lead by shaping a vision of academic success and creating a healthy, safe and secure school climate. At ECA and CEC we cultivate leadership in our teachers and support staff to inspire, motivate and empower students in learning and in life. Our focused, rigorous programs of study in all Academic areas are student-centered learning environments with extra supports for all students and ease of access to college resources through our numerous dual credit offerings. We have developed systems to facilitate the transition to CNM, UNM and

other local & regional institutions of Higher Education, as well as worked with leadership to streamline the college application process during their senior year. Our team has developed professionally through various trainings to be more knowledgeable about instructional best practices and research – we expect and support high-quality instruction in every classroom and have the toolbox to guide our teachers in that direction.

Walking the Talk is the single biggest way the principal has changed the way many teachers at ECA/CEC do business. Our CTE programs were struggling due to lack of resources seven years ago, but because today's economy demands a better educated workforce than ever before, and jobs in this new economy require more complex knowledge and skills than the jobs of the past, we knew we had to figure it out. Rather than complain, we sat and discussed strategies to fix this. For years these programs had been told that Perkins money was not available to them. Rather than settle for that answer, we went to the PED and we worked with them to develop an application that fit the guidelines. We have received over \$150,000 in three years.

In this instance, the principal led the school community in creating and revising a vision for the school that was informed by programmatic context and need. We will empower staff and holds them accountable for results, but teachers and students also know the extent we will go to ensure success in developing solutions. We continue to write grants, partner with local businesses, and seek out donations to continue moving our school forward.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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The APS Early College Academy is a high school diploma-granting College and Career Readiness School of Choice offering a rigorous academic curriculum designed to prepare students with skills that will make them valuable members of society.

ECA fosters an educational environment to explore career interests with a blend of rigor, relevance, and meaningful teacher-student relationships. At the Early College Academy, we equip our high school students with a purpose-built academic edge by delivering full-course academic instruction; we prepare students for a wide range of opportunities including post-secondary education, apprenticeships, and career pathway success; we deliver explicit instruction, practice, assessment, and certification paths; we encourage students to cultivate interests beyond traditional subjects and to demonstrate the depth and seriousness of study that appeals to colleges; and we deliver engaging, student-friendly interactive content to increase both motivation and information retention. We position our students ahead of the curve in an increasingly complicated world by exploring concepts, using group investigation, and developing critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. ECA/CEC Leadership has incorporated the intentional and systemic design of four key elements of the educational system—curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development—to promote learning with understanding within the context of advanced study.

The one single factor that puts ECA above all secondary schools is the level of parental involvement we foster through communication and invitation. We meet prior to students setting foot on campus, we maintain constant communication with parents regarding their student’s performance, and we openly and genuinely invite and encourage parents to be active participants in their student’s education. Leadership recognizes the critical role of the learning environment in fostering learning with understanding; we draw on our families, communities, and cultural experiences to create meaning and understanding. Deeper understanding occurs when students experience problem solving and inquiry in situations drawn from their personal experiences, so we want parents and students to share their experiences with each other. Curriculum is built on these shared experiences and prior knowledge. Ultimately our rigorous academic plan is successful because of the support our students receive from their individual communities. We believe that regardless of demographic factors, including ethnicity, race, religion, income or economic status, the single most important factor in a student’s success in secondary education is parent involvement, and we focus heavily on ensuring that parent involvement.