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Superintendent Thomas Anderson

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New Bedford Public Schools Accredited for Early College Credits *State approves NBPS Early College designation in partnership with BCC*

New Bedford Public Schools has earned the highly sought Early College Programs Designation in partnership with Bristol Community College, it was announced today by Superintendent Thomas Anderson. The designation was approved by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Early College Joint Committee and awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Early College Initiative on March 16.

Superintendent Anderson stated “This recognition demonstrates New Bedford Public Schools is highly qualified to provide its students with a comprehensive early-college education focused on STEM, the humanities, writing and critical thinking skills. It is a confirmation of our rigorous teaching and learning practice and our faculty and staff’s commitment to its continuous improvement.”

In commending the partnership between NBPS and BCC, Superintendent Anderson said, “With our Bristol CC partners in higher education we are able to include Early College as yet another pathway for students to obtain credentials at NBHS that already includes over 20 Advanced Placement courses, Dual Enrollment, National Academy Foundation certification, the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy, and the Academy of Honors, and the soon to be approved International Baccalaureate Program.”

In August 2021, NBPS in partnership with BCC successfully submitted Part A of the application. On October 15, the DESE Early College Initiative approved advancement to the second phase – Part B – of the Designation Application, submitted jointed by Magaly Sanchez, NBPS Curriculum, Data and Assessment Manager for Enrichment and Accelerated Programs, and Carlos Avila, Bristol CC Associate Director of College Access. “I am incredibly excited for the opportunities that the Early College Pathway will provide our students at New Bedford High,” said Ms. Sanchez.

Benefits of Early College Designation at New Bedford High School:

- NBHS students will have the opportunity to attend college free of charge via a cohort model that allows them to earn a minimum of 12 college credits while simultaneously earning their high school diploma.
- NBHS students will be able to participate in flexible pathways including Business, Engineering, Health Sciences and Technology as well as opportunities to earn cybersecurity certifications allowing students to begin to earn a living while still pursuing their college degree.
- The NBPS/Bristol CC Early College Program is designed to eliminate barriers and provides access to college for student populations that otherwise would not have enrolled in college or engaged in obtaining a college degree.
- Provides a pathway and system of supports prioritizing students that are historically underserved in higher education.

The Early College Program developed by New Bedford High School and Bristol Community College creates a sustainable partnership that will support personalized equitable access to higher educational learning opportunities for all students and in particular students of color and those that would otherwise not see college as an option for them.

In addition to BCC, partnerships to extend and support NBHS students' college and career opportunities have been formed with MassHire and OneGoal. The MassHire Department of Career Services oversees Massachusetts's network of Career Centers that assist businesses in finding qualified workers and provide job seekers with career guidance as well as referrals to jobs and training. OneGoal is a leading college access and success organization that works to close the degree divide and create a more equitable future for students.

Early College is an initiative to create and maintain partnerships connecting our state's districts and high schools with our state's colleges, to provide equitable opportunities for Massachusetts students, especially for those who will attend college as the first in their family.

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