



**NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT**

EQUITY-CENTERED RECRUITMENT GUIDE

EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOLS
JANUARY 2025



A guide for equitable outreach, access, and recruitment planning aligned to NMAC 6.13.30

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Section I: Introduction

This guide provides a framework for equity-driven recruitment in New Mexico Early College programs. It is designed to support intentional outreach to students historically underrepresented in college, reduce barriers to access, and promote recruitment practices that expand opportunity for all students.

This guide is intended for recruitment staff, counselors, administrators, and program coordinators responsible for planning, implementing, and reviewing Early College recruitment efforts. It may also be used for professional learning and training purposes.

The equity-centered recruitment practices in this guide are intended to inform planning, outreach, and continuous improvement. They do not establish additional eligibility requirements, selection criteria, or program design standards, and do not replace existing Early College guiding principles or state policy.

The guide contains:

- Equity-centered practices for recruitment to inform decision-making
- Checklists to support actionable steps
- Planning templates to track and monitor recruitment efforts

Section II: Equity-Centered Best Practices for ECHS Recruitment

The following equity-centered best practices establish a shared foundation for recruitment planning and outreach. Each practice is described in more detail in subsequent sections of this guide.

- **Equitable Access** – Ensure all students, regardless of background, have fair opportunities to participate.
- **Intentional Outreach** – Proactively connect with students who are historically underrepresented in college.
- **Barrier Reduction** – Identify and address obstacles in the recruitment process, such as transportation, language, or financial challenges.
- **Clear Communication** – Communicate program benefits and opportunities in ways that are understandable and inviting to a wide range of students.
- **Data-Informed Practice** – Use enrollment and demographic data to identify access gaps and adjust recruitment strategies.

These practices align with **NMAC 6.30.13**, which requires equitable and non-discriminatory access to Early College opportunities and prohibits recruitment practices that result in the exclusion of specific student populations.

Section III: Equity-Centered Recruitment Implementation

Equitable Access

Equitable access means ensuring that recruitment practices do not exclude or discourage students based on race, ethnicity, income, language status, disability, academic history, or geographic location. Early College recruitment should be structured so that all eligible students are aware of and able to pursue participation.

In practice, equitable access includes:

- Providing consistent recruitment opportunities across schools and student groups
- Avoiding informal or selective referral processes that limit who is encouraged to apply
- Ensuring timelines, prerequisites, and application requirements are transparent and applied consistently

Recruitment teams should review whether eligibility information, outreach methods, and enrollment processes create unintended barriers for any group of students.

Intentional Outreach

Intentional outreach means proactively connecting with students and families who are historically underrepresented in college, including students who are first-generation, low-income, English learners, and other traditionally underserved populations. Recruitment efforts should be deliberate and inclusive, using relationship-based recruitment strategies that prioritize trust and ongoing engagement, rather than relying on self-selection or informal referrals.

In practice, intentional outreach includes:

- Hosting information sessions and school visits in diverse communities and schools
- Engaging counselors, teachers, and community partners to identify and encourage students who may benefit from Early College
- Providing materials and presentations in multiple languages and formats to reach all families
- Leveraging targeted communications to groups traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education

Recruitment teams should review whether outreach efforts reach a wide range of students and families, particularly those who may not otherwise seek out Early College programs.

Barrier Reduction

Barrier Reduction means identifying and addressing obstacles that might prevent students from applying to or enrolling in Early College programs. These barriers can be logistical, financial, or informational, and reducing them is essential to ensuring equitable access for all students.

In practice, barrier reduction includes:

- Providing transportation or guidance on transportation options for students to attend events or classes
- Offering materials and communications in multiple languages to support English learners and families
- Clarifying application processes and timelines to reduce confusion or missed opportunities
- Identifying and minimizing financial obstacles, such as fees for testing or enrollment-related costs

Recruitment teams should review whether any aspect of the recruitment process, information dissemination, applications, timelines, or support, creates unintended barriers for students, and develop strategies to remove or reduce them.

Clear Communication

Clear Communication means presenting Early College program information in ways that are understandable, engaging, and accessible to all students and families, using asset-based messaging that emphasizes student strengths, potential, and aspirations. Effective communication ensures that students can make informed decisions about participation.

In practice, clear communication includes:

- Using plain language and avoiding jargon in all written and verbal materials
- Providing information in multiple languages and accessible formats for families with varying literacy or language needs
- Clearly outlining program benefits, expectations, timelines, and next steps
- Leveraging multiple communication channels (e.g., school announcements, social media, community events) to reach diverse audiences

Recruitment teams should review whether all audiences easily understand materials and messages and whether they effectively convey program benefits and opportunities.

Data-Informed Practice

Data-Informed Practice means using enrollment, demographic, and outreach data to guide recruitment decisions, identify access gaps, and continuously improve strategies. Thoughtful use of data ensures recruitment efforts are equitable and targeted.

In practice, data-informed practice includes:

- Tracking applicants and enrolled student demographics to monitor representation of historically underrepresented groups
- Reviewing outreach strategies and event participation to identify who is being reached and who may be missed

- Using data to refine recruitment approaches, adjust messaging, and remove barriers to access

Recruitment teams should review their data regularly to ensure recruitment strategies are reaching all eligible students and to inform continuous improvement efforts.

Appendix A

Tools for Planning, Tracking, and Reflection

These templates are designed to support planning, outreach, barrier reduction, and data-informed reflection. They can be used independently or together to support equity-centered recruitment.

Each table includes an example row for reference. Delete the example row and customize the table as needed.

Recruitment Planning Template						
Target Student Group	Key Message / Goal	Outreach Activity	Responsible Staff	Timeline	Success Indicator	Notes / Follow-Up
9th–10th grade students who are first-generation, low-income, and/or English learners	Ensure students understand that Early College is accessible, supported, and designed for students like them. Encourage application and support them through the process.	Host a “Family Early College Night” at the middle/high school with bilingual materials, student ambassadors, and Q&A with counselors. Follow up with targeted phone calls and texts.	Recruitment Lead, School Counselor, Student Ambassadors	November–January (before application window)	Attendance from targeted groups, completed applications from attendees, and follow-up contacts completed	Track attendance by student group; send reminder texts; schedule one-on-one follow-up meetings with interested students

Outreach & Event Tracking Template

Activity Name	Date	Location	Target Audience	Outreach Method	Attendance	Follow-Up Actions	Next Contact Date	Notes
Family ECHS night	11/15/25	High School Cafeteria	9th–10th grade students & families (first gen, EL, low-income)	Bilingual flyers, counselor invitations, student ambassadors, phone reminders	Est: 80 / Actual: 64	Send follow-up text to attendees, schedule counselor meetings, share application link	12/15/25	Include translated materials; provide childcare and transportation support

Barrier Reduction Planning Template

Barrier Category	Barrier Description	Strategy to Reduce Barrier	Responsible Staff	Timeline	Status	Notes
Transportation	Students cannot attend recruitment events or campus visits due to lack of transportation.	Provide school bus routes; host events at accessible community locations; offer virtual participation options.	Recruitment lead, counselor	Oct-Nov	In progress	Track which students need transportation; coordinate with district transportation and community partners

Data Informed Recruitment Reflection Template

Data Source Reviewed	Key Findings	Populations Reached/ Missed	Adjustments Needed	Timeline for Adjustments	Notes
2023–24 Enrollment & Application Data	Applications were strong overall, but first-generation and English learner students applied at lower rates than the school average.	Reached: general student population; Missed: first gen, EL, low-income students	Increase targeted outreach through EL programs and community partners; host additional family information sessions in Spanish; add student ambassador presentations in EL classrooms.	Next 4 weeks (before application window closes)	Track outreach by student group and monitor application submission rates weekly