

CHS students are earning early college credit

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Students at Connersville High School have the opportunity to earn college credits while they are in high school.

“The Early College High [School program](#) gives students a head start on completing college while in high school,” Michael Thompson, CHS business department chair, said. “Students can enroll in dual credit courses, which give them an opportunity to complete college credits and high school credits simultaneously. The ECHS [program](#) increases rigor and gives students the opportunity to complete one year of college for a minimal cost. The majority of college courses are free for students.”

ECHS provides students with a structured system of enhanced supports. Each student joins a cohort that is led by sponsors that offer academic advice, college and career information, college field trips and testing information.

ECHS establishes partnerships with one or more postsecondary institutions to enable students to accumulate credits towards a degree from the partner institutions or transfer them to another college. CHS has partnerships with Ivy Tech Community [College](#) and Indiana University, Thompson said.

ECHS is open to all students, but is tailored for first-generation college students, minorities and socio-economically disadvantaged students underrepresented in postsecondary education.

CHS is one of only 23 endorsed Early College High Schools in Indiana.

CHS became an endorsed ECHS in the spring of 2013. At that time, CHS was the seventh endorsed school in the state. About 325 students are enrolled in the ECHS program. CHS has 18 teachers that teach college dual credit courses.

Students that are enrolled in Ivy Tech courses are considered college students and may choose to participate in any on-campus activities. Any CHS student may enroll in an Ivy Tech course at no cost during their senior year. They may take the course on-line or on-campus.

In the past, the program has helped numerous students.

“The class of 2017 and 2018 combined had 48 ECHS Graduates that completed a total of 1,652 college credits and had a college savings of \$768,215 (based on the college/university they attended after CHS). \$862,052 was given in scholarship money.

The class of 2018 had six senior ECHS students that participated in the Ivy Tech Community College commencement before their CHS graduation.

The News-Examiner will be running a follow-up article on ECHS each Sunday to [provide](#) parents and students with further [information](#).