

# Early Middle College @ BCC

## One-Page Explainer



In the fall of 2023, Bay City Central High School (BCC) began enrolling all incoming 9th graders as Early Middle College (EMC) students, extending the traditional 4-year high school path to a five-year program of study. The full implementation of Central's redesign will be realized in the fall of 2027 when the first enrolled class enters their fifth year.

Plan for Phased Implementation

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
9th Grade	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10th Grade		✓	✓	✓	✓
11th Grade			✓	✓	✓
12th Grade				✓	✓
5th Year					✓

BCC's designation as an EMC high school requires a **commitment to offering all students expansive postsecondary pathways**, each defined by clear exit criteria. These pathways enable students to simultaneously earn a high school diploma and one of the following: 60 transferable college credits, an associate's degree, a professional certification, the MEMCA technical certificate, or participation in a registered apprenticeship. Students graduating without fulfilling one of these outcomes in five years are reported as "on-time, off-track," impacting the school's graduation rate. This underscores the importance of redefining Central's high school experience, ensuring every student is [aware, eligible, and prepared](#) for postsecondary education and training opportunities.

The EMC redesign at BCC provides significant benefits for its diverse student body. Firstly, it introduces an extra year for students behind in credits, helping to alleviate the stigma associated with longer high school attendance and ensuring they stay within the school system. Secondly, the program's financial support in the fifth year, which includes covering tuition, books, and transportation and providing advising and support services, is especially beneficial for students already intending to continue their education at Delta College. Finally, university-bound students can access free tuition and books through the EMC, **allowing them to earn transferable college credits as soon as they are ready**, giving them a substantial head start in their university studies. This comprehensive support ensures all students are well-prepared for their future academic and career paths, regardless of their goals after high school.

Central's redesign as an EMC aims to attract and retain students and families seeking affordable and well-supported postsecondary education or training. It is expected to enhance the school's reputation, elevate academic expectations, and foster a culture of excellence. While the standard program is five years, **students may choose to graduate in four years for various personal reasons**, such as athletic, military, or university commitments. This flexibility aligns with the school's supportive culture.

Established school traditions, including commencement ceremonies and academic honors, will continue as usual. Students who decide to graduate "early" in four years will receive their diplomas at the commencement ceremony. In contrast, the majority who stay for the full five-year program will be acknowledged with a special certificate celebrating their entrance into a postsecondary program.

The fifth year is designed to offer a college- or apprenticeship-like experience off of Central's campus, with coordinated support and services from partnering institutions. **The aim is to create a transition to postsecondary education or training, treating those in the fifth year like postsecondary students, with the additional support of the school's resources.** This approach ensures all students, including those behind in credits, receive appropriate support and experience a smooth transition to their future educational or career paths.