

Program Spotlight: Charlotte High School Early Middle College

Charlotte High School's Early Middle College (CEMC) is an innovative partnership between Charlotte High School, the Eaton RESA, Ferris State University, and Lansing Community College. All CEMC students sign on for a 13th year of school, which is spent enrolled in college courses as they work toward degrees and industry certifications. Comprised of three distinct programs, the CEMC is designed to meet students where they are and help prepare them for life after high school. These programs include CHS CARES, the Bulldog Academy, and the Capital Region Technical Early College.

Charlotte High School's partnership with Ferris State University's FerrisNow Program began in 2014. Ten students took the first Ferris classes offered at Charlotte. Since then, the number of students has grown to 180 students. Students have the opportunity to take 11 different University courses on the high school site.

Courses offered at Charlotte High School (CHS) include Career and Education Planning, College Study Methods, Computer Information Systems, English, Math, Political Science, and Spanish. Students can take a stand-alone course through concurrent or dual enrollment, as well as participate in the Woodbridge Promise College Prep curriculum.

The CHS administration and staff are dedicated to providing students with college credit and the skills they need to be successful in college and in their careers. At the 2018 FerrisNow Conference, the Charlotte staff heeded the challenge posed by Dr. Jason Bentley, Ferris' Dean of Retention and Student Success, which asked FerrisNow partners "what is your school's concurrent enrollment strategy?"

John Moran, CHS's FerrisNow political science instructor, remembers, "as we sat there and listened to Dr. Bentley speak, I looked around the table and we all realized that, as a school, we really did not have one and we decided together that night we probably ought to get one."

Charlotte's team of teachers, known as the Oriole 6-pack, developed a plan to work collaboratively to create systems for ensuring that the college programs at CHS continue to grow and thrive. At the start of the 2018-19 school year, the following instructors began to meet monthly: Josh Greve, Tina VanSyckle, Chad Little, Ryan Sisco, John Moran, and Brent Crossman.



The monthly collaborations focus on topics such as employment, professionalism, and soft skills standards for FerrisNow students. They also discuss ways to ensure college rigor, consistency, and best practices for instruction across all Ferris courses offered at CHS. The collaboration has helped instructors reaffirm Ferris procedures, policies, and requirements followed by partner high schools, and it has helped build consistency across University courses offered at CHS. The group also plans to extend an invitation to the Ferris faculty who teach in the Woodbridge Promise College Prep Program to ensure even more cohesiveness at CHS.

VanSyckle, the CHS computer information systems teacher, notes how FerrisNow has been a welcome addition to the school, “it is a valuable program and we want our students to be able to take advantage of these great opportunities.”