



# Office of Educational Access and Success

## Georgia Early College Initiative

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### Program Summary

**Problem:** Low income, minority, and other students may not be well served by traditional middle and high schools. As a result, they are underrepresented in Georgia's colleges and universities.

**Solution:** The Georgia Early College Initiative provides smaller, specialized schools where these students can receive rigorous instruction, a supportive environment, expectations for success, and personalized learning to prepare them for college.

- Sponsors: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (\$2 million, 5-year grant), Robert W. Woodruff Foundation (\$2 million annually, 3-year matching grant), and USG (\$1.2 million per year).
- Partners: OEAS, Georgia Department of Education, and Jobs for the Future.
- First Early College—Carver Early College in Atlanta—opened in 2005; graduated first class of 79 (100 percent) in 2009.
- 11 Early College sites currently serve rural, suburban, and urban local communities.

### Key Points

#### Overview

The Georgia Early College Initiative involves the creation of small schools where students can earn a high school diploma, with the potential to earn an associate's degree where applicable, or one to two years of transferable credit towards a bachelor's degree. Early College schools are partnerships between a local school system and USG institution. The schools provide a rigorous course of study, high expectations, and supportive, personalized learning. They incorporate effective instructional and structural practices, while building a college-going culture of success. Also, Early College strives to remove financial, academic, and psychological hurdles that prevent many students from entering and succeeding in college.

#### Goals

The Georgia Early College Initiative is designed to serve students who are underrepresented on Georgia's college campuses: low income, minority (with an emphasis on minority males), first generation college, English language learners, and academically struggling learners. The goals of the initiative are:

1. To increase college readiness and college success of high school graduates who are traditionally underserved in Georgia,
2. To develop and test model programs for young people that get better results, are more coherent and less duplicative, and make possible a shorter time to complete an associate degree where applicable or two years of college,
3. To study the effectiveness of the Early College model for reducing the high school dropout rate and increasing the college admission and college success rate of African American males, Hispanic students, and other traditionally underserved students,
4. To replicate throughout Georgia the successes of Early College.

#### Leadership and Partners

To realize these goals, the Georgia Early College Initiative is a collaborative effort led by the **Office of Educational Access and Success (OEAS)** within the **University System of Georgia (USG)**. Collaborating partners include the **Georgia Department of Education**, which oversees public education throughout the State, and **Jobs for the Future**, a policy research and action organization to promote innovative reform in education and workforce development. Sponsors include the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation**, **Robert W. Woodruff Foundation**, and **University System of Georgia**.

## Early College Details

### Enrollment

- *Total Enrollment: 2,170 students (Summer 2011)*
- *Low Income Population: 78%*
- *Minority Population: 86%*
- *First Generation College Population: 77%*
- *Four middle school/high school models, and seven high school models*
- *Four schools located on USG college campuses*

### Early College Sites

*Albany Early College – Albany*  
*Carver Early College – Atlanta*  
*DeKalb Early College Academy (DECA) – Decatur*  
*Early College Academy of Columbus (ECAC) – Columbus*  
*Engineering Early College at Maynard Jackson High School – Atlanta*  
*Georgia College Early College – Milledgeville*  
*Risley Early College Academy (RECA) – Brunswick*  
*Savannah Early College – Savannah*  
*Sumter County Schools-Georgia Southwestern Early College (SCS-GSW) – Americus*  
*Valdosta Early College Academy (VECA) – Valdosta*  
*Washington Early College – Atlanta*



### Key Indicators and Milestones

- First graduating class in 2009: Carver Early College, with 79 graduates and a graduation rate of 100 percent.
- 100% of Early College stand-alone schools achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) vs. 77% AYP for State of Georgia
- Three schools receiving Governor's Office Single Statewide Accountability System Awards for two years in a row
- 90% Early College high school graduation rate vs. 81% State of Georgia high school graduation rate
- 90% postsecondary enrollment rate among Early College graduates

### Contact Information

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