

Early College: A Partnership between Daley College and Spry Community Links High School, a Chicago Public School

The main impetus behind this partnership is to increase the number of students who successfully transition from high school into post-secondary institutions. By creating a conduit between two partnering institutions we have the greatest opportunity to facilitate a successful transition, one that embeds the right supports and fosters continuity. The vast majority of our students represent the first generation who will have graduated from high school in their families. Commensurately, taking the next steps to matriculate in college is an entirely new world, replete with challenges and opportunities.

As a three-year, year-round, high school, Community Links works closely with students and their families to successfully navigate high school and have the fruits of their effort lead to graduation. Our historical graduation rate hovers around 90%, far exceeding the graduation rate for the district. Our students are committed to the work of becoming successful, productive citizen with college degrees. We want the Early College partnership to prepare students to succeed in both college and the workforce through their work with the City Colleges of Chicago. Students should have options. It is exciting to provide students the option to go to college while still enrolled in high school. All students enrolled in the program will elect to continue their course-work for dual-credit through CPS and the CCC.

Many of our students enroll in the CCC after graduation. But without much needed supports, they often decide to stop going. Even fewer make the transition from community college to four-year colleges and university. Working collaboratively with our community college partner to develop the supports and structures to help students make that transition successfully will make all the difference. We hope that the partnership will enable honest conversation about the obstacles limiting college access and completion. As a community, we will be poised to learn from this partnership to better serve our students as they make the leap into college.