



Early College: Vermont State Review 2016–2021

Prepared for the Vermont Community Foundation by VSAC and the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE), with support from the Vermont State College System (VSCS)

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VSAC received a grant from the Vermont Community Foundation, *COVID-19 Response Fund: Learners in Transition*, to improve data sharing and use between several partners (VSAC, AOE, VSCS) to establish a baseline of information about Early College (EC) implementation in Vermont. This report summarizes Vermont data around EC since its implementation in 2016 and aims to inform future EC directions in a rapidly shifting environment.

Background on Early College in Vermont

In 2013, the Vermont Legislature passed Act 77 “An Act Relating to Encouraging Flexible Pathways to Secondary School Completion.” This Act creates a “Flexible Pathways Initiative” within the Agency of Education, which expands opportunities for secondary students to complete high school and be ready for post-secondary experiences, including college. Early College is one of the programs that makes up the Flexible Pathways portfolio.

Early College provides the opportunity for students to complete their final year of high school by taking postsecondary courses through a Vermont postsecondary institution. As of May 2022 the following Vermont institutions participate in the program: the Vermont State University (Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, Vermont Technical College) the Community College of Vermont, Goddard College, and Norwich University. Students must apply and be accepted to the Early College program at these institutions. When students enroll in Early College they are unenrolled from their local high school and postsecondary institutions invoice the Agency of Education for each student who participates in the Early College program. Students participate EC tuition-free.

While Early College students receive their first year of college tuition-free, students and families must pay their room and board (if they choose to live on campus), books, supplies, and fees. High school students who may have financial need must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Vermont State Grant application to access up to \$1,000 through a need-based (income-contingent) Vermont Basic Incentive Grant which may be used to help cover these costs. Students who qualify for the Vermont Basic Incentive Grant (“VSAC Grant”) also automatically qualify for a voucher of \$150/per

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semester, sent directly to the student, to cover books, fees, travel expenses, etc. Students do not have access to federal financial aid during Early College.

Data Sources

This report provides an overview of the demographics and outcomes of students who participated in Early College since the inception of Act 77.

Data sources for this report include:

- **Vermont higher education institutions:** Invoices from all higher education institutions that participate in the Early College system are submitted twice annually to the AOE and include names of students who participated in EC.
- **Vermont AOE:** Student level data from the State Longitudinal Data system of the Vermont AOE was matched to EC student names provided on higher education institution invoices. The bulk of the demographic and outcomes information presented in this report is provided by the AOE. In some cases, state-level comparison data is provided, and this data is also from the AOE.
- **VSAC:** Student level data on VSAC Grant application, award, and disbursement status, as well as student participation in VSAC's federally-funded college access outreach programs (GEAR UP and Talent Search), was matched to the Vermont AOE data based on names and dates of birth.

Findings

The AOE received invoices from postsecondary institutions for 1,614 students who participated in Early College from 2016-2021. The names of 48 of these students (3% of the total) could not be found in the AOE's data records. The remaining 1,566 students (97%) were successfully matched to the AOE's data records, allowing access to their corresponding demographic, outcome, and VSAC-provided data.

All 1,566 students who were listed on invoices provided to the AOE by postsecondary institutions *and* found in the AOE database are included in the information presented in the remaining sections of this report. These sections present findings related to EC participation rates over time, as well as EC student demographics, use of the Vermont State Grant, and continuation rates into postsecondary.

Early College participation rates

Table 1 (next page) outlines Early College student counts and participation rates, calculated as the percentage of Vermont seniors enrolled in EC, each year since program inception. Of the 1,566 students included throughout this report, 93% (n = 1,461) completed a full year of Early College, 6% (n = 96) enrolled in only the Fall semester, and less than 1% (n = 9) enrolled in only the Spring semester. (See Appendix A for information about the subset of students who completed only the fall semester of EC.)

Table 1. Early College participation rates since program inception

School year (dates below are Spring of SY)	Early College student count	State senior student count	Percent of seniors in Early College
2016	123	5,607	2.2%
2017	179	5,561	3.2%
2018	252	5,502	4.6%
2019	354	5,540	6.4%
2020	327	5,474	6.0%
2021	331	5,492	6.0%
Total	1,566		

Figure 1 demonstrates that the percentage of Seniors that have participated in EC increased modestly since the program’s inception but leveled off in the 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 school years.

Figure 1. Percentage of seniors who enrolled in Early College, by year

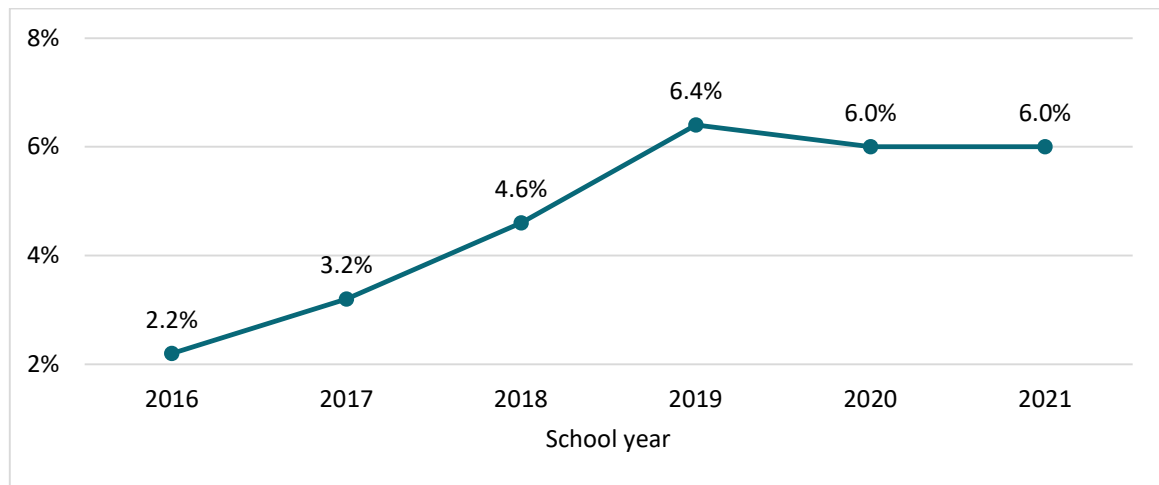


Table 2 (next page) shows students’ participation in EC broken down by the institution where they enrolled. CCV shows the highest EC participation each year.

Table 2. Early College student participation counts over time, by college

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Burlington College	3	*	*	*	*	*	3
Castleton University	12	17	9	40	37	39	164
Community College of Vermont	61	106	125	142	162	169	765
Goddard College	2	2	1	2	1	1	9
Northern Vermont University	39	38	34	70	47	46	274
Norwich University	6	16	18	25	27	30	122
Vermont Technical College/VAST	*	*	55	75	53	46	229
Total	123	179	252	354	327	331	1566

NOTES:

- * VTC/VAST data was not available in the invoice data for the 2016 and 2017 school years, but was included in the VSC legislative report. That report shows 51 VTC/VAST participants in 2016 and 62 in 2017.
- * Burlington College closed in 2016.
- If a student was enrolled in multiple colleges for EC, the student is counted at their most recent college.
- Johnson State College and Lyndon State College merged into Northern Vermont University as of the 2019 school year. Only combined totals are shown in this report.

Early College participant demographics

Table 3 shows EC participation counts broken out by the high school students attended before enrolling in Early College.

Table 3. Early College students' most recent high school

High School	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Arlington Memorial High School	0	0	0	2	1	2	5
Bellows Falls UHS #27	1	0	1	2	1	2	7
Bellows Free Academy (St Albans)	2	8	6	7	14	8	45
Bellows Free Academy (Fairfax)	1	1	5	2	1	2	12
Black River US #39	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
Blue Mountain US #21	0	1	0	1	3	1	6
Brattleboro UHS #6	1	4	8	10	8	8	39
Burlington Senior High School	2	1	1	7	10	12	33
Burr and Burton Academy	0	0	1	2	0	0	3
Cabot School	2	1	2	5	0	1	11
Canaan Schools	0	1	0	1	1	0	3
Champlain Valley UHS	1	1	0	6	6	11	25
Chelsea High School*	0	0	1	5	1	0	7
Colchester High School	0	5	9	4	7	11	36

High School	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Craftsbury Schools	0	1	1	2	4	1	9
Danville School	3	0	0	4	2	0	9
Enosburg Falls Middle-High School	3	4	4	8	5	4	28
Essex Community Ed Ctr	5	5	10	6	9	12	47
Fair Haven UHS #16	6	7	3	10	7	6	39
Green Mountain UHS #35	0	0	2	1	1	4	8
Hartford High School	1	1	3	0	6	2	13
Harwood UHS	5	14	10	19	15	22	85
Hazen UHS #26	9	9	5	13	4	3	43
Lake Region UHS #24	0	1	0	4	2	3	10
Lamoille UHS	10	6	13	10	6	6	51
Leland and Gray UHS	2	4	5	2	5	1	19
Lyndon Institute	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Middlebury Union High School	1	4	2	2	2	5	16
Mill River USD	4	8	5	2	8	10	37
Milton High School	0	2	5	4	2	5	18
Missisquoi Valley UHS	0	5	3	15	8	10	41
Montpelier High School	1	3	3	9	7	13	36
Mt Abraham UHS #28	4	1	3	3	3	6	20
Mt Anthony SR UHS #14	2	5	2	5	5	7	26
Mt Mansfield UHS	2	1	5	8	7	5	28
North Country UHS	4	6	14	10	10	15	59
Northfield Middle/High School	4	7	9	6	9	6	41
Otter Valley UHS	0	2	2	8	1	7	20
Oxbow UHS #30	0	0	0	3	2	3	8
Peoples Academy	4	3	6	16	10	15	54
Poultney High School	2	0	0	1	3	0	6
Proctor JR/SR High School	0	0	1	1	2	1	5
Randolph UHS	0	4	10	12	11	3	40
Richford JR/SR High School	0	0	1	1	1	0	3
Rivendell Academy	1	1	3	2	1	1	9
Rochester School*	1	2	3	2	0	1	9
Rutland High School	3	1	5	15	9	11	44
So Burlington High School	6	2	9	9	17	4	47
So Royalton Elem/High School	1	3	3	0	0	0	7
Spaulding UHS	3	4	14	6	17	22	66
Springfield High School	1	2	2	2	2	1	10
St Johnsbury Academy	0	0	0	4	2	0	6
Stowe Middle/High School	0	2	2	3	3	0	10

High School	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Thetford Academy	0	0	3	2	2	0	7
Twin Valley Middle/High School	0	0	2	0	2	3	7
Twinfield US #33	2	7	2	4	0	0	15
U32 UHS	8	8	13	17	17	16	79
Vergennes UHS	1	1	0	3	3	2	10
West Rutland School	0	2	1	3	0	1	7
Whitcomb JR/SR High School*	0	4	6	0	0	0	10
White River Valley High School	0	0	0	10	2	3	15
Williamstown Middle/High School	0	3	5	7	18	7	40
Windsor Schools	0	0	2	2	1	0	5
Winooski High School	4	1	2	5	8	5	25
Woodstock UHS	5	1	1	4	5	3	19
TOTAL	119	173	241	340	321	313	1,503

NOTES:

- 61 students are not included in the above table. 57 students with missing high school data are not included and 4 students with a private school associated with their record are not included.
- Some schools experienced changes to enrollment patterns during this time frame that altered the size or composition of their student body. For example, Montpelier High school began admitting Roxbury town students to its roster in 2019. Such changes are not noted in this table but may have impacted EC participation rates. Some schools in the table also may have closed due to consolidation.

Table 4 outlines the gender identity of students who participated in EC since program inception. The gender distribution of K–12 students enrolled in Vermont schools during the 2020–2021 school year is provided for context. Given that female students made up nearly 70% of EC participants but closer to half of the student population statewide, these results indicate that female students are more likely to enroll in EC than male students.

Table 4. Gender of Early College students (2016–2021)

Subgroup	Count of all EC students (2016–2021)	Rate among all EC students (2016–2021)	Comparison rate (Statewide K–12 students during 2021 school year)
Female	1091	69.7%	48.4%
Male	475	30.3%	51.7%
Total	1566	100%	

NOTE:

- At this time of this report, the AOE is required to classify gender as binary (male or female) so information about other gender identities was unavailable.
- The “Comparison Rate” is the gender of all students at the K-12 level in Vermont during the 20-21 School Year.

Table 5 outlines the race/ethnicity of students who participated in EC since program inception. Results demonstrate that white students were slightly over-represented in EC, and all other racial/ethnic groups were slightly under-represented.

Table 5. Race/ethnicity of Early College students (2016–2021)

Subgroup	Count of all EC students (2016–2021)	Rate among all EC students (2016–2021)	Comparison rate (Statewide K–12 students during 2021 school year)
American Indian	*	*	0.3%
Asian	29	1.9%	2.2%
Black or African American	21	1.3%	2.5%
Hispanic	24	1.5%	2.6%
Multiracial	25	1.6%	3.5%
Pacific Islander	*	*	0.1%
White	1,459	93.2%	88.7%
Total	1566	100%	

NOTES:

- Counts of less than 11 students are suppressed to protect student identity.
- The “Comparison Rate” is the race/ethnicity identity of all students at the K–12 level in Vermont during the 20–21 School Year.

Table 6 and Figures 2–6 (next page) provide information on EC participation among important subgroups of students, including English Learners (EL), students with an IEP or 504 plan on file, students identified as homeless, and students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL). Students were identified as members of a given subgroup if they were a part of that subgroup at any point during high school.

Students were identified as FRL-verified only if they were identified as individually eligible during high school, so those who were eligible *only* due to the community provision (based on school-level poverty rates) were not counted as FRL-verified in this report. It is important to note that while FRL eligibility is the best available proxy for income status, for a variety of reasons it could possibly undercount the participation of low income students in Early College.

For each subgroup, Table 6 includes the percentage of EC students identified as members of that subgroup since program inception as well as a statewide comparison rate. Because membership in these subgroups varies markedly by grade level, statewide comparison rates were calculated based on only the senior class instead of all students in grades K–12.

Comparing sub-group membership rates among EC participants versus statewide reveals that EC students were notably less likely to have an IEP, less likely to have a 504, and less likely to be verified as eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) than seniors statewide. They were

slightly less likely to be English Language learners or homeless than seniors statewide, but these differences were smaller.

Table 6. Early College students by subgroup membership

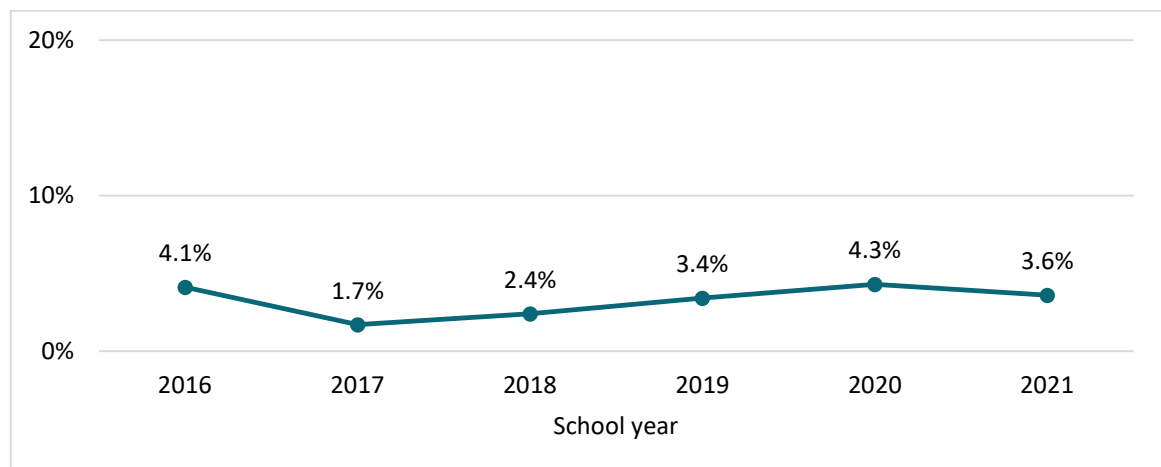
Subgroup	Count of all EC students (2016–2021)	Rate among all EC students (2016–2021)	Comparison rate (Statewide Senior students during 2021 school year)
EL	52	3.3%	4.7%
IEP	30	1.9%	19.9%
504	145	9.3%	13.0%
Homeless	16	1.0%	1.9%
FRL	513	32.8%	42.8%

NOTES:

- Subgroup counts and rates include EC students who were identified as members of the given subgroup at any point during high school. The same criteria were used to calculate subgroup membership for the statewide senior cohort.
- Students who received free lunch under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) definition were counted as FRL only if they also qualified as FRL-eligible individually.

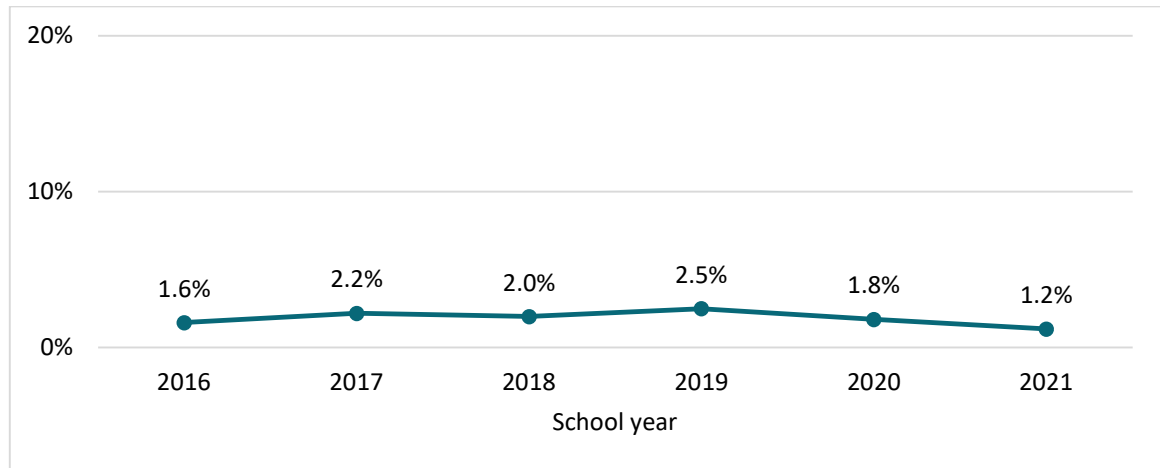
Figures 2–6 provide information on EC participants’ subgroup membership rates over time. With the exception of FRL eligibility, the percentage of EC students identified as members of each subgroup remained relatively stable from year to year.

Figure 2. Percentage of EC students who are English Learners (EL), by year



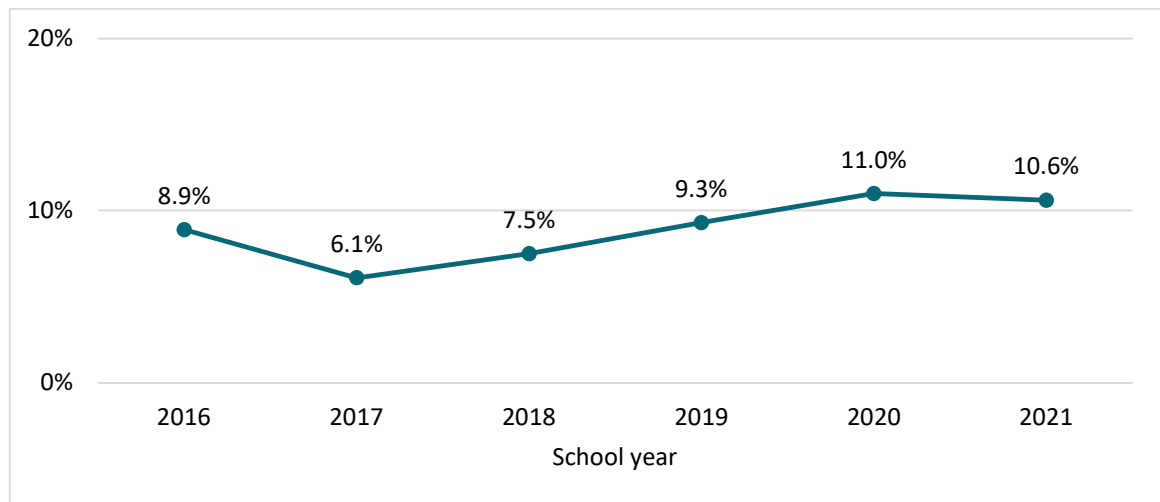
NOTE: Students are counted as EL if they were ever counted as EL during grades 9–12.

Figure 3. Percentage of EC students who have an IEP, by year



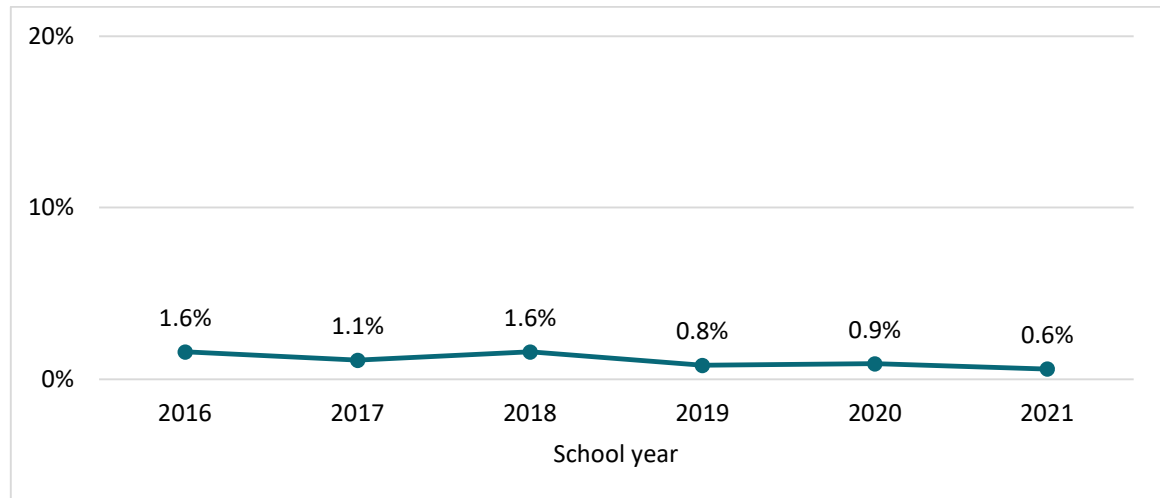
NOTE: Students are counted as having an IEP if they ever had an IEP during grades 9–12.

Figure 4. Percentage of EC students who have a 504, by Year



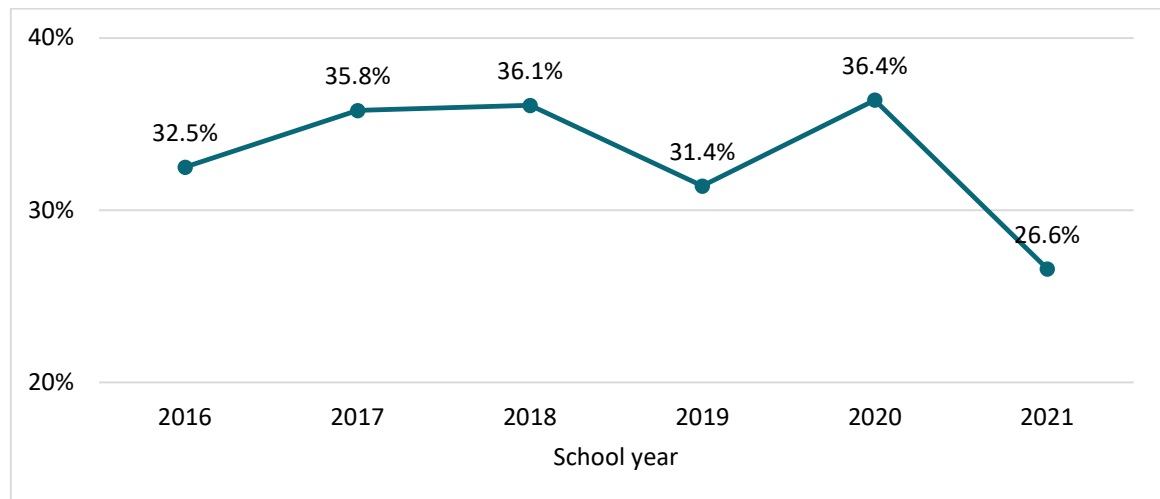
NOTE: Students are counted as having a 504 if they ever had a 504 during grades 9–12.

Figure 5. Percentage of EC students who have been homeless, by year



NOTE: Students are counted as homeless if they ever were homeless during grades 9–12

Figure 6. Percentage of EC students eligible for Free and Reduced Priced Lunch (FRL)



NOTE: As noted above, students are counted as FRL eligible if they were ever verified as FRL-eligible during grades 9–12 (i.e. at any point during their high school career). Students who received free lunch under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) definition were counted only if they also qualified as FRL-eligible individually. Students were identified as FRL-verified only if they were identified as individually eligible during high school, so those who were eligible only due to the community provision (based on school-level poverty rates) were not counted as FRL-verified in this report. It is important to note that while FRL eligibility is the best available proxy for income status, for a variety of reasons it could possibly undercount the participation of low income students in Early College.

Early College participation and pathways to postsecondary

Table 7 outlines the number and percentage of EC students, since EC inception, who also participated in Dual Enrollment (DE) or Fast Forward. In Vermont DE allows VT residents who are juniors and seniors, and are accessing publicly funded education, access to 2 college credit bearing courses while receiving high school and college credit. Fast Forward allows students enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) to get high school and college credit for two college courses taught at regional CTE centers. Both DE and Fast Forward are tuition-free for students.

The percentage of seniors (class of 2021) who participated in DE/Fast Forward statewide is provided for comparison. Results show that the rate of DE and Fast Forward participation is higher among EC students than among seniors statewide.

Table 7. Early College student participation in Dual Enrollment/Fast Forward

Subgroup	Count of all EC students (2016–2021)	Rate among all EC students (2016–2021)	Comparison rate (Statewide senior students during 2021 school year)
Dual Enrollment participants	776	49.6%	31.8%

NOTE: The comparison point provided is the percentage of the most recent Senior Class (2021) who participated in Dual Enrollment (DE) or Fast Forward.

Figure 7 (next page) shows that rates of Dual Enrollment participation among EC students have not changed markedly over time.

Figure 7. Percentage of EC students who have taken a DE course prior to EC

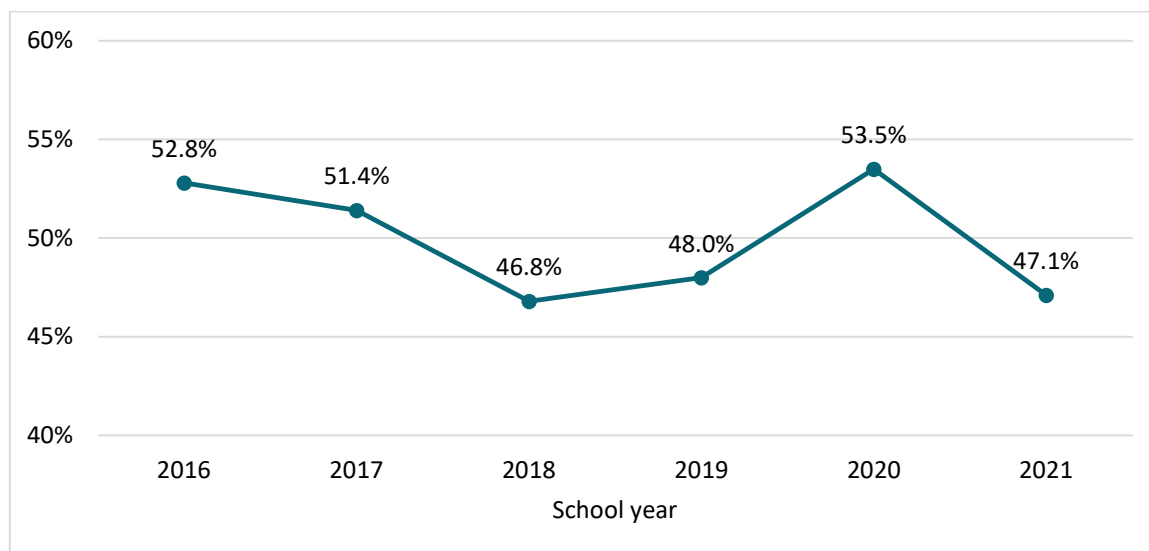
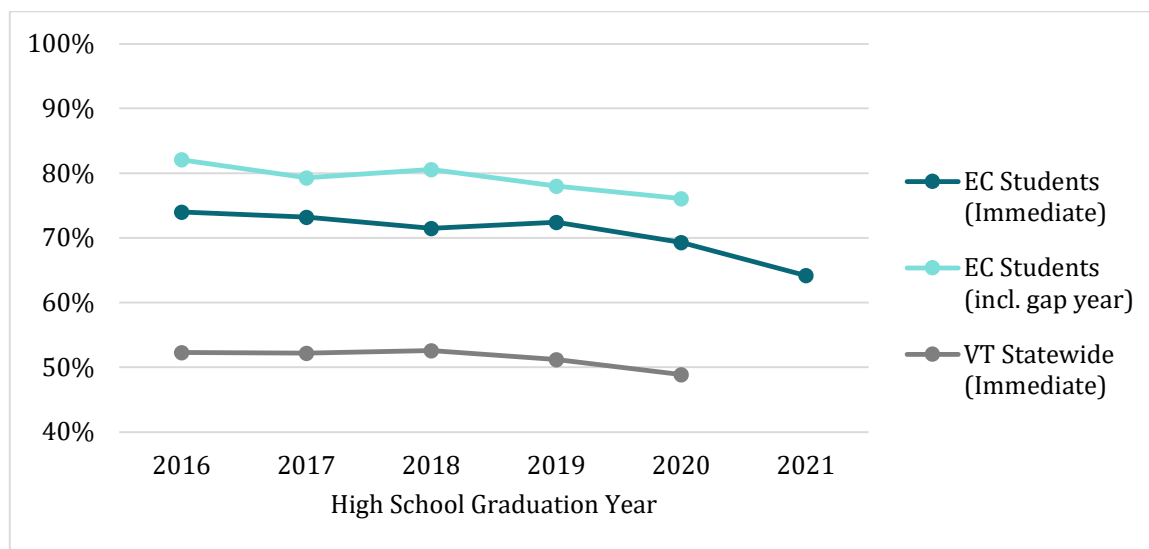


Table 8 outlines the percentage of EC students who enrolled in postsecondary education either by the fall semester immediately following their EC year (within 4 months of high school graduation) or by the following fall semester (within 16 months of high school graduation) to allow for a gap year. The statewide postsecondary enrollment rate is provided for comparison.

Table 8. Percentage of students who enrolled in postsecondary education following EC

High School graduation year	Early College students enrolled by 10/15 of high school graduation year	Early College students enrolled by 10/15 of year after high school graduation year	Comparison students (Vermont statewide) enrolled by 10/15 of graduation year
2016	74.0%	82.1%	52.3%
2017	73.2%	79.3%	52.2%
2018	71.5%	80.6%	52.6%
2019	72.4%	78.0%	51.2%
2020	69.3%	76.1%	48.9%
2021	64.2%	Not yet available	Not yet available

Figure 8 (next page) compares rates of postsecondary enrollment for EC students versus Vermonters statewide and demonstrates that EC students have consistently enrolled in postsecondary education at higher rates than Vermonters high school graduates statewide.

Figure 8. Postsecondary enrollment rates among EC and comparison students

NOTES:

- Enrollment rates presented above include enrollments at any Title IV postsecondary institution as reported by the National Student Clearinghouse.
- Qualifying enrollments must have a start date on or after the student’s high school graduation date. Withdrawals (enrollments that ended before the end of the term) are excluded. Full-time and part-time enrollments are included.
- Enrollment comparison points are taken from the New England Secondary School Consortium Common Data Project’s 2021 Annual Report. (https://www.greatschoolspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Common-Data-Project_2021-Report_Final.pdf)

Early College financial aid

As noted above, while Early College students receive their first year of college tuition-free, students and families must pay their housing and meals (if they choose to live on campus), books, supplies, and fees. Students do not have access to federal financial aid during Early College. However, high school students with financial need can complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Vermont State Grant application to qualify for a need-based (income-contingent) Vermont Basic Incentive Grant (“VSAC Grant”) of up to \$1000, which is dispersed to the institution from the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC). Students who qualify for the VSAC Grant also automatically qualify for a stipend of \$150 per semester. The stipend is mailed directly to the student to cover books, fees, travel expenses, etc. This section of the report examines EC students’ patterns of applying for and receiving this need-based financial aid.

Table 9 (next page) shows that that 37.9% of students applied for the need-based VSAC Grant as well as the check for a \$150 stipend per semester to cover books and travel fees, etc. Of those who applied, just over half (55.5%) received the VSAC Grant.

Figure 9 illustrates changes in the percentage of EC students who applied for a VSAC Grant each year since EC program inception. The grant application rate varied from a peak of approximately 44% during the 2017-2018 school year to a low of approximately 29% during the 2020–2021 school year.

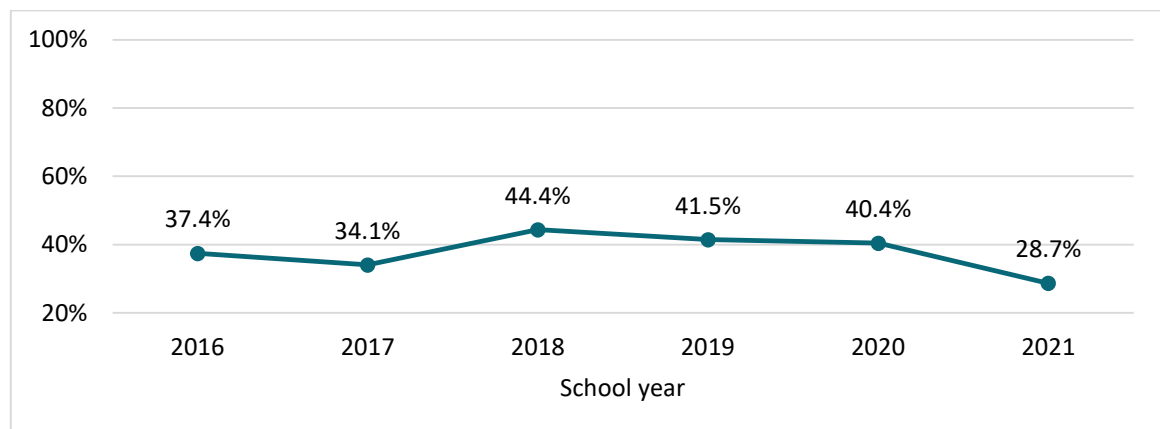
Table 9 also shows that VSAC Grant application rates differed by students’ FRL status. Among the 513 students who participated in EC and were verified as FRL-eligible at any point during high school, 61.5% (n=315) applied for a VSAC Grant. Among the 1,054 non-FRL verified students who participated in Early College, only 26.4% (n=278) applied for a grant. Because the VSAC Grant is need-based, it is not surprising that we see a higher application rate among FRL-verified students.

VSAC Grant award patterns also differed by students’ FRL status. Among the 315 grant applicants who were verified as FRL eligible, 74.3% (n=234) were awarded the grant. Comparatively, 34.2% (n= 95) of applicants who were not verified as FRL eligible received a VSAC Grant. This indicates that the success rate of grant applications among non-FRL-verified students was roughly half that of FRL-verified students. This is not surprising because as a group, FRL-verified students should have more financial need and therefore a higher percentage should qualify for this need-based aid.

Table 9. EC Students who applied for and were awarded need-based financial aid

	EC Students who were FRL verified	EC Students who were not FRL verified	Total EC students
Applied for VSAC Grant	61.4% (315/513)	26.4% (278/1053)	37.9% (593/1,566)
Awarded a VSAC Grant (among those who applied)	74.3% (234/315)	34.2% (95/278)	55.5% (329/593)

Figure 9. Percentage of Early College students who applied for a VSAC Grant, by year



Not all FRL-eligible students who applied for a VSAC Grant received one. Of the 81 grant applicants who verified as FRL-eligible during high school but were not awarded a grant, 75% were deemed ineligible for the grant based on level of financial need, suggesting their financial situation had improved. An additional 20% did not complete all required components of their grant applications. The remainder applied after grant funds had run out or had their applications cancelled due to not enrolling at their identified institution. (In the early years of Early College implementation funding for the Vermont State Grant and the EC/DE Stipend was expended before the end of the school year. In more recent years funding has been sufficient to cover eligible students throughout the entire school year.)

VSAC program participation among EC students

This section of the report explores relationships between students’ participation in EC and in VSAC’s Outreach programs. GEAR UP and Talent Search are federally funded programs that serve students who are from a modest income background and/or first in their family to pursue postsecondary education.

Table 10 outlines EC participants who were also served by a VSAC Outreach program. Since EC inception, nearly 18% of EC students have also participated in a VSAC Outreach program. By comparison, less than 11% of Vermont seniors during the same time frame had participated in a VSAC Outreach program.

Table 10. EC student participation in VSAC Outreach programs (GEAR UP and Talent Search) since EC inception

EC students who participated in VSAC GEAR UP	128
EC students who participated in VSAC Talent Search	153
Total EC students who participated in either VSAC Outreach program (GEAR UP or Talent Search)	281
Percentage of EC students who participated in VSAC Outreach programs (GEAR UP or Talent Search) since EC inception	17.9%
Comparison rate (Estimated percentage of Vermont Seniors from classes of 2016-2021 who participated in VSAC Outreach programs)	10.7%

Table 11 (next page) disaggregates EC participation data by students’ FRL status and VSAC Outreach program participation. Results show that among EC students, FRL verified students were more likely to have participated in VSAC Outreach (35.3% Outreach participation rate) than non-FRL verified students (9.5% Outreach participation).

Table 11. EC student participation in VSAC Outreach programs, by FRL status

	FRL verified	Not FRL verified	All EC students
Participated in VSAC Outreach	35.3% (181/513)	9.5% (100/1053)	17.9% (281/1566)
Did not participate in VSAC Outreach	64.7% (332/513)	90.5% (953/1053)	82.1% (1285/1566)

Table 12 disaggregates EC students’ VSAC Grant application and award status information by whether the students also participated in a VSAC Outreach program. Results show that the VSAC Grant application rate was much higher among EC students who participated in VSAC Outreach programs than among EC students who did not (nearly 73% vs. 30%). There are two likely factors contributing to this difference. First, VSAC Outreach participants have access to a VSAC staff person to make them aware of the VSAC Grant and support them in applying for it. Second, students served by VSAC Outreach programs are more likely to be from lower income backgrounds, which may mean they are more likely to seek out financial aid such as the VSAC Grant.

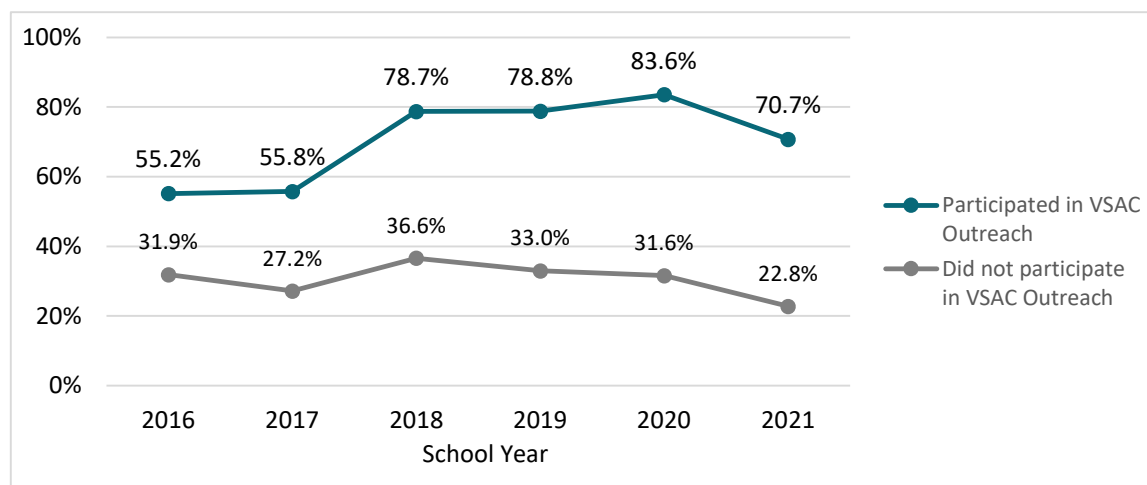
Among EC students who applied for the VSAC Grant, VSAC Outreach program participants were more likely to be awarded a grant than those who did not participate in a VSAC Outreach program (70% vs. 48%). Again, while having support in applying for VSAC Grants may be a factor here, income level is likely also a factor.

Table 12. Grant application rates among EC students who also participated in VSAC Outreach programs

	Participated in VSAC Outreach	Did not participate in VSAC Outreach	Total EC students
Applied for VSAC Grant	72.6% (204/281)	30.3% (389/1285)	37.9% (593/1,566)
Awarded a VSAC Grant (among those who applied)	70.1% (143/204)	47.8% (186/389)	55.5% (329/593)

Figure 10 (next page) illustrates the relationship between participation in VSAC Outreach programs and grant application rates among EC students over time. Among EC students who did not participate in VSAC Outreach, rates of grant applications remained relatively stable from 2016 until 2020 and then dipped slightly in 2021. Among EC students who were served by VSAC Outreach programs, grant application rates increased markedly from 2016 until 2020, and the dip during the 2021 school year was less pronounced.

Figure 10. Grant application rates among EC students who were vs. were not served by a VSAC Outreach program over time



Because FRL-verified students are more likely to participate in VSAC Outreach programs, it is difficult to tell whether the higher grant application rates observed among Outreach participants in Figure 10 are driven by the support Outreach students receive through those programs or by the higher level of financial need among that population of students. To better understand whether Outreach participation is associated with higher grant application and award rates independent of financial need, we examined grant-related outcomes among only those EC students who were FRL verified. By limiting our analysis to only FRL verified students, we can be more confident that favorable grant outcomes among VSAC Outreach are related to the support the students received from those programs, not a differing level of financial need. Results shown in Table 13 confirm that among FRL-verified EC students, grant application rates were over 25 percentage points higher for VSAC Outreach participants (78%) than for students who did not participate in VSAC Outreach programs (52%). VSAC Outreach participants were also more likely to receive a grant if they applied for one, with award rates over 10 percentage points higher than their non-Outreach peers (81% vs. 69%).

Table 13. Grant application and award rates among FRL-verified EC students, by Outreach participation

	FRL-verified VSAC Outreach participants	FRL-verified but did not participate in VSAC Outreach	Total FRL-verified EC students
Applied for VSAC Grant	77.9% (141/181)	52.4% (174/332)	61.4% (315/513)
Awarded a VSAC Grant (among those who applied)	80.9% (114/141)	69.0% (120/174)	55.5% (329/593)

Questions for Further Research

This report leaves Vermont with several questions to consider for further research including:

1. Postsecondary enrollment and persistence:
 - a. Do students' postsecondary enrollment trends change based on demographics?
 - b. How do post-secondary persistence levels for students who participated in EC compare with Vermont students statewide?
2. Qualitative information to supplement quantitative information: Specific student, family, educator and school counselor experiences may illuminate or illustrate specific trends outlined in this report.
3. Questions for policy or practice: What potential pilot or targeted interventions might encourage increased participation in EC, or more equitable participation amongst sub-groups?

Appendix A: Information on Students Who Completed Fall Semester Only

The descriptive information below provides information about students who completed only Fall semester of Early College and are not represented in the report above.

*Any data counts of numbers under 10 people has been suppressed and are noted with an Asterisk.

Year	Count
2016	*
2017	12
2018	12
2019	19
2020	23
2021	29
Total	96

Gender	Count
Female	66
Male	30
Total	96

At this time of this report, the AOE is required to classify gender as binary (male or female) so information about other gender identities was unavailable.

Race/Ethnicity	Count
American Indian	*
Asian	*
Black or African American	*
White	90
Hispanic	*
Total	96

College	Count
Castleton University	*
Community College of Vermont	45
Goddard College	*
Johnson State College	*
Lyndon State College	*
Northern Vermont University	11

Norwich University	*
Vermont Technical College/VAST	21
Total	96

	ELL	FRL	IEP	504	Homeless
Yes	*	36	*	21	*
No	94	60	95	75	95
Total	96	96	96	96	96

Note: ELL, FRL, IEP, 504, and Homeless count EC students who ever had this status during Grades 9–12.

	Previously took a Dual Enrollment course
Yes	32
No	64
Total	96