EEDW School Evaluation Processes, Updated 1/17/2023

Since the inception of the EEDW project, the project design has undergone several changes that have broadened its scope—making it easier for schools to participate and for students to access high-interest coursework in information technologies (IT). We have also made important modifications to the study design following discussions with our evaluation team, the federal advisory team, and our most critical partners—ECHS principals.

Recognizing that schools are hesitant to restrict access to online IT courses, we have changed the design of the study so that **no students will be prevented from enrolling in online IT courses or accessing other project components.**

Instead, using enrollment information for your 9th–11th grade students, project evaluators will randomly select students to receive encouragement (called "encouragement group") through text messages and other methods to enroll in online IT courses and to engage in with business partners. Students may be selected for the encouragement group regardless of their selected career pathway. Parents will receive an opt-out form to remove their students from inclusion in the study.

Research Goal: Understand the benefits for ECHS students of **enrolling in at least one online IT course and engaging with partner businesses**, relative to not enrolling in any online IT courses. The design reflects the federal requirement to rigorously assess the impacts of the program via a randomized control trial (RCT).

What this means to you and your students.

1. All freshmen, sophomores, and juniors in the ECHS are considered eligible for this study, not just the students who have expressed an interest in an IT pathway, unless their parents/ guardians select to opt out of the study.

2. The ECHS will be asked to provide a list of eligible students and their contact information (including phone number and email) to REC-1. REC-1 will distribute a parent consent form via email to the families of eligible students, and record if any students opt out of the study. Then, the evaluation team will randomly assign students that do not opt out to the encouragement or control group for the study. REC-1 will return to the ECHS the list of students who were randomly assigned to the encouragement group.

3. Students and their parents / guardians students in the encouragement group will receive text or email messages through the school messaging system with information about, and encouragement to, enroll in online IT courses. Students and families will receive at most 4 messages per semester through the school's communication system, with the messages timed to arrive during the peak enrollment period.

4. Students randomized into the control group will not receive the text messages focused on online IT course opportunities.

5. There is no restriction on these students enrolling in the online IT courses, but for the study design to succeed, it is important that the encouragement leads to higher rates of enrollment in IT courses for treatment group students than is typical of control group students.

Timing of the Study: The federal office has approved an adjustment to the study periods that gives us more flexibility and time to prepare. Following is the timeline of critical study activities.

Upcoming Essential Dates and Deadlines

SY 2022-2023
February 28: School MOUs
March 15: Send enrollment data for current 9th, 10th, 11th grade students
March 31: Distribute first set of encouragements to selected students

SY 2023-2024
August 1: Submit list of desired purchases for reimbursement authorization
October 1: Submit invoice for reimbursement

Data Collection: The research team will seek to collect administrative data about students from the New Mexico Public Education Department starting in Spring 2024, and annually thereafter. Each ECHS will only be responsible to sending student rosters and contact information to REC-1 and for sending and tracking messages to students in the encouragement group.

Additionally, project evaluators will work with the ECHSs to design a student survey to measure social and emotional outcomes (SEL), such as academic engagement, intention to attend college, sense of belonging, and interactions with advisors. The ECHS will distribute the survey to all students in the school, and will analyze the data and produce reports of the results to each ECHS.