

Williamson County School EIC Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Entrepreneurship Innovation Center (EIC)?

The Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center (EIC) is a hub for high school student entrepreneurs and innovators from across Williamson County. The EIC is located in the Annex building next to Franklin High School at 104 Claude Yates Drive – just look for the big, roll-up garage doors. Our 10,000 square foot facility includes meeting rooms, presentation spaces, collaborative work areas, classroom space, and a fabrication lab for the manufacturing of products.

Who can attend the EIC?

All rising tenth through twelfth grade students in Williamson County Schools are eligible to attend the EIC during the day for credit. Enrollment is determined through an application process.

The EIC is open to all WCS high school students, regardless of their CTE pathway or their non-CTE pathway. We want students from all ten high schools, in every grade level. The one common thread will be that the students at the EIC should have a drive or interest in offering a service, developing a product, starting a business, being an entrepreneur, or thinking outside of the box.

How does the EIC work?

All EIC students still attend their regular high school but come to the EIC at some point in the day to take a class for credit. We work with each high school counselor to arrange the best time for each student to attend their EIC class. Most EIC students use two academic periods for their EIC class: one period is their actual EIC course, and a second period – called EIC Study Hall – is their travel time. For students who can only afford to use one academic period, we offer a Zero Period class from 7:00 – 7:40 AM, and students travel to their high schools during first period. Zero Period gives them an 8th academic period.

Is transportation provided?

The county provides bus transportation during the middle of the academic day, from approximately 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Students may also drive themselves to and from the EIC with parent permission.

Why should a student consider taking a class at the EIC?

Many high school students have an interest in entrepreneurship or being an innovator, even if they are not currently in marketing or entrepreneurship classes. The EIC will allow students with every interest, from every grade level, and in all types of courses to develop their entrepreneurship skills and launch their idea.

In addition, many of our WCS students are already running small businesses, or have a great idea for a business, product, or service. The EIC offers high

school credit for students who are running their own business, a beneficial perk for teen entrepreneurs.

Also, the EIC offers courses that are not currently offered at any high school: EI 1, EI 2, and EI Practicum. Attending the EIC allows students to access these innovative courses.

Finally, the EIC offers students many opportunities that they might not receive at their current high school. The EIC has a state-of-the-art facility with a Maker Space, Fabrication Lab, meeting rooms, and an Incubator-style environment. In addition, EIC students will have access to business mentors from the area and are invited to attend sessions in the ongoing Speaker Series, hearing stories of success and failure from real entrepreneurs and innovators. The EIC also hosts pitch nights, allowing EIC students the opportunity to present their business idea to investors and advisors.

Which courses are offered at the EIC?

The EIC offers three unique courses.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation 1 (EI 1): This course is for students who are just beginning their journey into the world of entrepreneurship. Students work with a small group to launch a business, such as an innovative product, service, or other business idea in an incubator-style environment. Students do not need to have their business idea or any experience before taking this course. The focus is on learning the process of opening a new business using a Lean Start-Up methodology.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation 2 (EI 2): Student teams from EI 1 may return for a second year and take their business idea from a start-up to a fully-launched business.

EI Practicum: This course is for students who are already operating their small business, offering them high school credit for their entrepreneurial endeavors. This course is much more of an independent-study experience, focusing more on the student's product than on the process of entrepreneurship.

How can a student apply to take a class at the EIC?

The EIC application window is from December through February each year for acceptance into the following year's EIC classes. The application includes short answer questions, teacher recommendations, and an interview. To apply, students will visit the EIC Google Site through the button on their ClassLink dashboard. Please note that the EIC Google Site is only visible to WCS students from their MyPlace account. Parents will not be able to visit the EIC Google Site.

