

**Royal Early College High School**  
**Memorandum of Understanding**  
**Between Royal ISD and Blinn College District**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between the Royal Independent School District (RISD) and Blinn College District (Blinn), collectively referred to as the "Parties". This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into as of June 1, 2022.

The purpose of this MOU is to outline the intended collaboration of the Parties, as listed above, in maintaining a four-year early college high school, denoted as Royal Early College High School (RECHS). As an Early College High School, RECHS offers traditionally underserved students (high percentage of at-risk students, economically disadvantaged students, and first-time college bound students) an opportunity to complete a high school diploma and earn college credit hours towards Associate's and Bachelor's degrees. RECHS will serve grades 9-12. During their attendance at RECHS, these students will develop a commitment to learning, a capacity for critical thinking, an understanding of their future role as community leaders, and the academic skills and technical competencies necessary to achieve success in higher education and in the workforce.

**TERM**

The term of this MOU shall commence on June 1, 2022, and will terminate on May 31, 2024 unless renewed or extended by the Parties.

**LEADERSHIP**

The Parties will create a leadership structure that meets regularly to address issues of design and sustainability. The leadership team shall include and meet as needed with the following leaders or their designees:

- School District, Royal Independent School District (RISD)
  - Superintendent
  - Director of Advanced Academics
  - Royal High School Principal
  
- Institution of Higher Education (IHE), Blinn College
  - College Chancellor
  - Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs
  - Vice Chancellor of Student Services
  - Director of Dual Credit

**RECHS ORGANIZATION AND FACILITIES**

RECHS is located at 34499 Royal Rd, at the Royal High School of RISD in Brookshire, Texas. Blinn will provide access to all of their main campus facilities (library, bookstore, food services, learning center, computer labs, etc.) to all RECHS students. Blinn College is also committed to providing faculty for the respective Blinn College courses taught for the RECHS ninth through twelfth grade levels. RECHS will provide classroom space and the necessary equipment for all Blinn courses taught on the RECHS campus.

RECHS students must adhere to Blinn’s policies and code of conduct requirements. Failure to do so, may result in revoking individual student privileges.

## **SERVICES, RESOURCES, AND FINANCIAL MODEL**

RISD and Blinn will cooperatively establish a learning community that blends high school and college, instilling a college-bound culture among the RECHS students.

Through this cooperative arrangement, RISD will provide:

- a. Faculty and staff for the management and instruction of high school requirements and courses.
- b. The ECHS will operate on RISD property. RISD shall assign a staff member to serve as a contact person and supervisor on the College campus if students under the age of 16 years old are on College property.
- c. Students meeting the admissions criteria will be accepted for enrollment at RECHS regardless of the student's attendance zone under the guidelines of RISD board policy FDA. No student will be accepted/admitted who does not reside within Royal ISD except in the following circumstances:
  - If a resident RECHS student moves outside the district then in accordance with FDA LOCAL, any student in grades 9-12 who moves outside the District may apply to remain enrolled for the remainder of high school on a tuition basis.
  - Children of nonresident RISD employees in accordance with RISD board policy FDA Local; *A nonresident employee may request that his or her child be admitted into District schools by filing an application with the Superintendent or designee. Transfers shall be granted for one regular school year at a time, on a tuition-free basis. When the parent or guardian is no longer employed by the District, the student may continue his or her enrollment in the District until the end of the semester in which the employment termination took place.*
- d. RISD will provide TSIA testing for RECHS students at Royal High School.

Through this cooperative arrangement, Blinn will provide:

- a. College-level courses offered at the RECHS campus from the ninth through twelfth grades. Blinn courses taken in the summer by RECHS students will be paid for by the respective student, except by recommendation of the Blinn College and RECHS leadership, with final approval by Blinn College administration. To develop and maintain a sustainable financial model, Blinn College will receive fee reimbursement from RISD each long semester and approved summers according to the following options. See Appendix A for Course Tuition/Fee Schedule.

\_\_\_\_\_ Option 1: IF, an instructor who is a Blinn employee provides dual credit instruction, regardless of location or modality; THEN, RISD will pay tuition and fees according to Appendix A.

\_\_\_\_\_ Option 2: IF, a qualified and approved instructor employed by RISD is utilized and Blinn pays no compensation to the instructor; THEN, both the tuition and fees for that course are waived (e.g. there is NO COST to RISD for a college ECHS course taught on a high school campus by a high school instructor).

- b. Dual credit courses and instructors.

- c. The College will provide adequate instructional support services, including advising and counseling, to meet the needs of RECHS students. Appendix C establishes common advising strategies and terminology related to dual credit and college readiness.

The designated academic advising contact for dual credit is:

Shannon Williford  
 Director, Dual Credit Programs  
 979-209-8218  
 shannon.williford@blinn.edu

- d. Blinn student IDs for all RECHS students enrolled in Blinn College
- e. The option for RECHS students to participate in Blinn student clubs and organizations
- f. Allow RECHS students the same access to IHE facilities, services & resources as all other Blinn students
- g. The school district will initiate the process for Disability Services course accommodations by providing students with the required documentation outlining required accommodations and services under an Individual Education Plan (IEP). It is the student's responsibility to turn in the documentation to the Office of Disability Services at the College.

## **FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION**

All teachers hired by RISD to teach at RECHS must meet Texas state certification requirements in their subject areas and must be licensed by the State of Texas. RISD faculty will only teach dual credit courses if they meet faculty credentialing guidelines recommended by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges' Comprehensive Standard 6.2a, Faculty qualifications, have the approval of the cooperating Institute of Higher Education (IHE), and meet Blinn College Faculty Credentialing Guidelines. Faculty of RECHS will participate weekly in an embedded professional development time, as is part of the RECHS model. Faculty of RECHS will be evaluated annually by RISD according to criteria established by RISD and the Texas Education Agency. Any instructor teaching IHE classes, for dual credit, must be evaluated in accordance with THECB and SACSCOC standards by IHE staff.

Faculty from the IHE who teach college courses on the RECHS campus ("Dual Credit Instructors") will be considered faculty of their employed IHE. All dual credit course teachers must meet the faculty credentialing guidelines recommended by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges' Comprehensive Standard 6.2a, Faculty qualifications, have the approval of the cooperating Institute of Higher Education (IHE), and meet Blinn College Faculty Credentialing Guidelines. Faculty of RECHS will be evaluated annually by RISD according to criteria established by RISD and the Texas Education Agency. Instructors for dual credit courses will be selected by Blinn College in accordance with the College's standard hiring procedures.

All Blinn College employees teaching courses on the RECHS campus will be required to undergo a criminal history background check with RISD, as required by RISD policy and applicable law. This criminal history background check will include fingerprinting and the cost of the fingerprinting will be incurred by RISD. Based on the results of the prescribed background check and fingerprinting, RISD will have the sole discretion on eligibility to teach on RISD campuses.

RISD will appoint a RECHS administrator whose only responsibility is administration of RECHS. The RECHS on-site administrator will have decision-making authority in ISD matters of budgeting, staffing,

scheduling, student assessment, curriculum, and professional development in congruence with RISD, RECHS and TEA policy.

## **COURSES AND CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT**

Blinn will provide access to courses that are included in the College's approved THECB core curriculum, as well as other course options that are major specific, or could serve as electives to all qualified RECHS students. Developmental courses are not available to dual credit students. Kinesiology courses that count towards the high school graduation physical education requirement will not be offered to dual credit students.

For all dual credit courses, Blinn will provide current course descriptions and syllabi as requested by RECHS staff and/or students. RISD will be responsible for ensuring alignment between Texas Education Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and college course objectives in order to grant dual credit.

RECHS will work with Blinn to ensure the quality and instructional rigor of the dual credit program. RECHS will work with Blinn to vertically align RECHS high school courses with dual credit courses. RISD will allow RECHS to alter the scope and sequence of high school courses as needed to meet the goals of vertical alignment to dual credit courses. See Appendix B for four-year plan.

The TEA Toolkit offers information on graduation, college and career resources among others, and can be used as a reference by counselors, students, and families.

RECHS will periodically initiate joint professional development for ECHS faculty and college and counselors/advisors (including both district and IHE faculty/staff).

## **INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND CALENDAR**

Information on new and/or used textbooks, workbooks, and other text-related materials will be provided by Blinn at least two months prior to the first day of each new semester. Whenever possible, Blinn will work to allow RECHS to keep books for multiple semesters. Term limits on textbooks are only for those with hard copy books but for courses using Open Educational Resources or First Day Access, students will be provided with information for the text appropriate for that course. Students will attend Blinn classes at the RECHS campus or as an online course. Courses will be composed of dual credit students only or of dual and college credit students. All high school students enrolled in College academic dual credit class will follow the official College calendar regardless of dual credit class location, course instructional modality, or School District calendar. Neither the College nor the School District shall cancel a class unless it is absolutely necessary. The cancellations shall be processed through the school District administration upon consultation between the appropriate representatives of the School District and the College. If deemed necessary by the College, lost instructional time shall be made up by arrangement with the School District.

## **POLICIES: GRADING, STUDENT ENROLLMENT, ATTENDANCE, AND CONDUCT**

Blinn will report a numerical grade as is stated in the dual credit agreement between Blinn and RISD. Blinn will transcript/award college credit earned through dual credit during the same semester that credit is earned. RECHS will follow the Blinn policies regarding make up work and/or late work for all dual credit courses taken by RECHS students.

All RECHS students will be required to complete and obtain a college-ready score on exams required by Blinn such as TSIA, ACT, or SAT requirements. RECHS students must meet all prerequisites for college courses

offered through Blinn. Blinn staff will assist with the registration of RECHS students for Blinn courses. RECHS students will be required to complete Blinn assessments or placement procedures.

RECHS will run a semester grading cycle where individual progress reports will be sent home to parents at 3-week intervals with a report card mailed home after the conclusion of each semester. RECHS will obtain RISD board approval for any changes in the RECHS grading and/or make-up/late work policies for high school courses taught at RECHS. RECHS will follow the Blinn policies regarding make up work and/or late work for all dual credit courses taken by RECHS students.

In order to continue taking Blinn dual credit courses a student must remain in academic good standing with Blinn College. The requirements for Academic Good Standing, as stated in the Dual Credit Interlocal Agreement with RISD and consistent with EGA(Local) of the College Board Policies, which are attached as part of Appendix A of the Interlocal agreement, are that a student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 (C). Note that the Blinn College transcript will only reflect a letter grade. A 2.0 cumulative grade point average is the minimum average required for graduation. If a student drops below a 2.0 they are placed on probation for a semester. If the GPA remains below a 2.0 after the next semester, RECHS dual credit students will be eligible to apply for a suspension appeal.

Blinn is not responsible for maintaining attendance records for RECHS students beyond the records kept for a traditional Blinn student. However, instructors of dual credit courses taught on the RECHS campus will submit daily attendance rosters to RECHS administration. Note that RECHS students will follow the course attendance rules of the course provider, Blinn, and will also follow the school attendance policies of TEA and RISD.

RECHS students will not be penalized for missing any dual credit courses due to standardized testing (ex. PSAT, SAT, ACT, TSIA) or UIL events. RECHS students will observe bad weather day modifications and/or late start modifications as per the Blinn College schedule.

While attending a dual credit course, RECHS students will follow the Blinn protocol for incivility and/or academic misconduct as stated in the Blinn College catalog, Blinn College Administrative Regulations, and Blinn College Board Policy. RECHS students will be subject to the same penalties for violations of these protocols as any other enrolled college student.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF STATEWIDE INSTRUMENTS (Subchapter B, Chapter 39)**

RECHS will be responsible for all administration of state tests. RECHS will coordinate with Blinn to schedule any missed dual credit classes due to state mandated testing. RECHS students will not be penalized for missing any dual credit courses due to state mandated tests.

### **PROVISIONS FOR SHARING STUDENT DATA**

When considering the dissemination of student data, all FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) guidelines will be followed by RECHS and Blinn. Blinn College faculty and staff will not speak to RECHS parents without a FERPA release form on file. Parent initiated questions and concerns regarding dual credit coursework and student performance will be handled through RECHS staff. Parents of RECHS students will be discouraged from directly contacting the dual credit instructors employed by Blinn College. An RECHS designee will be granted view only access to review RECHS student grades.

## **EVALUATION, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT**

An evaluation of the program and of the effectiveness of the collaboration will take place each academic year. The results of the evaluation will be reported at the end of each academic year. The evaluation will satisfy all federal and state guidelines for the evaluation of K-12 schools, in addition to any other evaluative guidelines established for the program. RISD and Blinn will collaborate in developing research and evaluation of RECHS. This research and evaluation agenda will examine critical aspects of RECHS (e.g. student academic performance, performance on college standardized tests and state standardized tests, number of college hours earned, instructional effects, curriculum development products, effectiveness of professional development, and impact on educational policy and decision-making).

## **PROVISIONS FOR CLOSING RECHS**

If the partners decide to discontinue operating RECHS, they must meet the provisions listed below:

- a. An eleventh-grade cohort, at RECHS, will continue operation through that cohort's scheduled graduation from RECHS.
- b. Services to enrolled ninth and tenth grade students will be continued through graduation for those cohorts.
- c. While in the process of discontinuing operation, RECHS may not enroll any additional students in grades that have been phased out.
- d. While RECHS is in the process of discontinuing operation, it must continue to meet all of the required design elements and provide full support for all students enrolled in RECHS.

## **FISCAL AGENT**

RISD will act as the fiscal agent for the purposes of this MOU. Blinn College will bill RISD/RECHS for costs incurred, at the end of each Fall and Spring semester, as per the example spreadsheet denoted as Appendix A.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES**

### **Regulatory Requirements**

All members of RECHS faculty and administration, as well as any other party connected to the program, must comply with regulations regarding the report of any and all alleged child abuse, school-related crimes, and sexual molestation. The RECHS Advisory Board is charged with ensuring adherence to all applicable regulatory matters, whether local, state, or federal, which affect the well-being of students enrolled at RECHS.

### **Compliance with the Laws**

All signatories to the MOU will be responsible for complying with applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, mandatory policies, and guidelines. Though identified as partners in this MOU, the Parties are and remain independent legal entities and no legal business relationship is formed or intended to be formed under the performance of this MOU or any subsequent agreement to follow.

## **MODIFICATION OF THE MOU**

This MOU may be modified or amended only by mutual agreement of the Parties in writing, and any such modification or amendments shall be attached and become a part of this collaboration as if set forth herein.

**TERMINATION OF THE MOU**

Any Party has the right to terminate this MOU upon service of written notice to the other Parties 90 days prior to the date of termination. In this event, the date of termination will be the day after the end of the semester during which the 90-day period expires.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have executed this MOU on this date of 6/21/2022.**



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Rick Kershner  
Superintendent  
Royal Independent School District



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Dr. Mary Hensley  
Chancellor of the Blinn College District

**Appendix A**  
**Course Tuition/Fee Schedule**

<b># of Credits</b>	<b>Fees</b>	<b>Fees if taken course 3 times or more by RECHS Student</b>
1	\$26	\$90
2	\$52	\$180
3	\$78	\$270
4	\$104	\$360
5	\$130	\$450
6	\$156	\$540
7	\$182	\$630
8	\$208	\$720
9	\$234	\$810
10	\$260	\$900
11	\$286	\$990
12	\$312	\$1080
13	\$338	\$1170
14	\$364	\$1260
15	\$390	\$1350
16	\$416	\$1440
17	\$442	\$1530

**Add lab fees, if applicable.**



SAMPLE DEGREE PLAN 2022-2023

PEHS Course	HS Course Name	HS Credits	TCDS	College Course Name	College Hours	Blinn College Core Curriculum Standard
03220100	Honors English I	1				
03080003030800	Honors Algebra I OR Honors Geometry	1				
03010200	Honors Biology	1				
0303010003030100	World Geography or AP Human Geography	1				
034010003440200	Spanish I or Spanish II	1				
	Elective or TST Prep	1				
	Elective	1				
01250050	Learning Framework: College Transition	0.5	EDUC 1300		1	
03155800	Music Appreciation I	1	MUSI 1308		3	
<b>TOTAL Year 1</b>		<b>6.5</b>			<b>6</b>	
03220200	Honors English II	1				
03080003030800	Honors Geometry OR Honors Algebra II	1				
03040000	Honors Chemistry	1				
03440200	Spanish II or Elective	1				
	Elective or TST Prep					
	Elective					
03340100	United States Hist A	0.5	HIST 1301	US History Part I	3	Social Sci & Behavioral Sci
03340100	United States Hist B	0.5	HIST 1302	US History Part II	3	Social Sci & Behavioral Sci
13009800	Professional Communications	0.5	SPCH 1315	Public Speaking	3	Social Sci & Behavioral Sci Institutionally Designated
	Degree Plan Specific Coursework	0.5	Degree Specific Coursework		3	
<b>TOTAL Year 2</b>		<b>8</b>			<b>12</b>	
03050000	Honors Physics	1				
	Elective or TST Prep	1				
	Elective	1				
	Elective	1				
	Elective	1				
03250300	Dual Credit English III A	0.5	ENGL 1301	Comp & Lit	3	Communications
03250300	English III B	0.5	ENGL 1302	Comp & Lit	3	Communications
03330100	Federal Govt	0.5	GOVT 2305	Fed. Govt	3	Social Sci & Behavioral Sci
03380021	Ind Std in SS	0.5	GOVT 2306	State Govt	3	Social Sci & Behavioral Sci
03102500	Ind Std in Math	0.5	MATH 1314	College Algebra	3	
	Degree Specific Coursework	0.5	Degree Specific Coursework		3	
<b>TOTAL Year 3</b>		<b>8</b>			<b>18</b>	
	Elective	1				
	Elective	1				
	Elective	1				
	Elective	1				
03230400	Dual Credit English IV A	0.5	ENGL 2332		3	
03230400	Dual Credit English IV B OR Honors English IV	0.5	ENGL 2333		3	
03310300	Dual Credit Economics	0.5	ECOM 2301	Microeconomics	3	
13037200	Sci Res & Design	0.5	Degree Plan Specific (BIOL, CHEM, GEOL, etc.)		4	Natural Sciences
13037200	Sci Res & Design	0.5	Degree Plan Specific (BIOL, CHEM, GEOL, etc.)		4	Natural Sciences
	Degree Specific Coursework	0.5	Degree Plan Specific Coursework		3	
	Degree Specific Coursework	0.5	Degree Plan Specific Coursework		3	
	Degree Specific Coursework	0.5	Degree Plan Specific Coursework		3	
<b>TOTAL Year 4</b>		<b>8.0</b>			<b>26</b>	
<b>Degree Plan Total</b>		<b>32.5</b>			<b>62</b>	

## **Appendix C**

### **Advising Terminology**

**As per SB 1276 (86<sup>th</sup> Legislature, 2019), below is the terminology related to advising for dual credit and college readiness.**

**Advanced Placement (AP)** – College-level coursework designed by the College Board which provides students the potential to earn college credit with a qualifying score on an Advanced Placement exam.

**Advising** – Individualized academic guidance for students to help them succeed in their future education and career goals.

**College Level Examination Program (CLEP)** – Students can earn credit by examination by taking the CLEP exam.

**Contact Hours** – The total number of hours a class meets each week.

**Degree Plan** – A statement of the course of study requirements that an undergraduate student at an institution of higher education must complete in order to be awarded an associate or bachelor's degree from the institution.

**Dual Credit** – High school students take college level courses, for both high school and college credit.

**Drop** – Dual credit students must request to be dropped from a class through the Blinn College Dual Credit Office.

**Early Admissions** – College level courses taken by high school students for college credit only.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** – A federal law that protects the privacy of student records at a public Institution of Higher Learning.

**Lower Division Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM)** – the official list of courses approved for general academic transfer that may be offered by public community and technical colleges in Texas for state funding.

**Math Placement Exam (MPE)** – Students can earn credit by examination for math courses by taking the MPE.

**Prerequisite** – A course required to be successfully completed before taking another course.

**Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM)** – Provides community and technical colleges with web-based inventory of pre-approved courses developed in close partnership with Instructional Specialists representing a wide variety of technical fields.

## Appendix D

### Statewide Dual Credit Goals

As per HB 1638 (85<sup>th</sup> Legislature, 2017) below is the alignment of state goals for dual credit

**Goal 1:** Independent school districts and institutions of higher education will implement purposeful and collaborative outreach efforts to inform all students and parents of the benefits and costs of dual credit, including enrollment and fee policies.

Measures of implementation: Documentation summarizing collaboration and outreach efforts of IHEs and secondary school partners will be readily available and posted.

Examples:

1. Collaboration between ISDs and the Blinn College Dual Credit Program to host informational sessions for students, parents and community partners on the benefits and cost of dual credit opportunities.
2. Prospective Student Relations Advisors provide information about the College and dual credit opportunities at high school and community events.
3. High School Counselor Workshops are provided for area high school counselors. Information about departmental programs and College support services is offered.

**Goal 2:** Dual credit programs will assist high school students in the successful transition to and acceleration through postsecondary education.

Measures of implementation: Analysis of measures in enrollment in and persistence through postsecondary education, disaggregated by student sub-population.

Examples

1. The Office of Prospective Student Relations offers college tours.
2. Preview Days are offered, and students are able to learn about departmental information, Student Services, Student Life and Housing, if available.
3. Dual credit students are automatically transitioned to traditional students, once they reach the spring of their senior year.

**Goal 3:** All dual credit students will receive academic and college readiness advising with access to bridge them successfully into college course completion.

Measures of implementation: Analysis of measures in enrollment and degree completion, disaggregated by student sub-population.

**Examples:**

1. Advising and career counseling are offered to all dual credit students.
2. Dual credit students have access to the Learning Center, the Writing Center, Disability Services, Counseling, the Testing Center, Libraries and Open Computer Labs.

**Goal 4:** The quality and rigor of dual credit courses will be sufficient to ensure student success in subsequent courses.

**Measure of implementation:** Analysis of performance in subsequent course work.

**Examples:**

1. Institutional research data showing student performance in college credit.
2. In accordance with THECB regulations, and SACSCOC, Dual Credit instruction must follow the same curriculum, materials, grading, and rigor in all classes, regardless of location or modality.
3. College readiness requirements are in place for students to be eligible to participate in dual credit, as the courses taken are taught at a college-level.