



**PRESS RELEASE: Ferris Enters Partnership to Offer Early College Program to Traverse Bay Area Students**

**Betsy L. Musolf** to: Archive

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Included below is a press release about Ferris State University's partnership with the Traverse Bay Intermediate School District and Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City to offer high school students the opportunity to save time and money earning a college degree through the Traverse Bay Area Early College program. Any questions about this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.



Early College.doc

The online version of the release can be viewed here:

<http://www.tbactc.org/student-services/Traverse-Bay-Area-Early-College.asp>.



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**Ferris Enters Partnership to Offer Early College Program to Traverse Bay Area Students**

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University has partnered with the Traverse Bay Intermediate School District and Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City to offer high school students the opportunity to save time and money earning a college degree.

The Traverse Bay Area Early College program provides students in 15 high schools across the five-county region a chance to earn up to 73 college credits, tuition free, by the time they graduate. The five-year program will blend high school and college work in a rigorous, guided track, compressing the time it usually takes to complete a high school diploma and a college degree.

“This initiative provides a fabulous opportunity for students and parents to set and realize ambitious goals through the supporting partnership of their local high schools, NMC, Ferris and TBAISD,” said Roberta Teahen, associate provost for Academic Affairs at Ferris. “It has never been more important for students to plan to continue their education beyond high school, and financially it has never been more difficult for some to achieve this. Higher education will be affordable for the students who enroll in this early college option and dedicate themselves to accomplishing the work that will lead them to successful careers and productive lives.”

Students who demonstrate academic eligibility have the opportunity to participate in accelerated learning in fields of study leading to careers in allied health; science, technology, engineering and math (STEM); or business and accounting.

The TBA Early College program differs from high school dual enrollment and other early college programs by:

- Targeting students who are high academic achievers;
- Focusing on specific fields of study for careers in business, engineering, and allied health;
- Offering a five-year course of study that will simultaneously award a high school diploma and up to the first two years of college when successfully completed;
- Allowing high school students to take more college classes than dual enrollment permits; and
- Providing students a 13th year, during which students will take a full load of college classes with tuition costs funded through the sending high school.

Students attend their local high schools and complete advanced academic coursework prior to admission to the early college program. Eligibility for the program must be earned through qualifying scores on the COMPASS Test and fulfilling NMC and Ferris admission requirements noted on the application. Courses are taught by certified early college instructors at the TBAISD Career-Tech Center and local college campus classrooms.

Early college students will work with advisory personnel to select a sequence of high school and college courses leading to the completion of all Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements, as well as an associate degree or technical certificate and/or a minimum of 32 transferrable college credits upon successful completion of the program. Students will follow a five-year track that will include high academic rigor, leadership training and community-based. Depending on the career chosen, an early college student can earn up to 73 college credits in the STEM pre-engineering, 56 college credits in accounting and business administration, or up to 64 credits toward various medical career pathways.

Course tuition is funded through Michigan school-aid funds.

TBAISD Career-Tech Center will welcome its first students in Fall 2012. The initial year of the program is open to currently enrolled Career-Tech Center students entering eleventh grade who are in pursuit of one of the early college career pathways and have already met eligibility requirements based on their past two years of academic performance.

Parents with students currently enrolled in eighth and ninth grade can learn more about the program and view sample course sequences at [www.tbactc.org](http://www.tbactc.org).

For more information, contact Meredith Schmidt, Early College Program specialist, at (231) 922-6425 or [mschmidt@tbaisd.org](mailto:mschmidt@tbaisd.org).

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