



Whittier Union HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

To Achieve and Maintain Excellence...

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 6, 2024 **CONTACT:** Andrea Garcia **PHONE:** 909-447-2403

Whittier Union School to Offer Early College Academy Classes for Associates Degree Pathway

WHITTIER – Pioneer High School is deepening its college-ready culture through the expansion of its Early College Academy and partnership with Río Hondo College, which will now include an opportunity for new students to earn an associate degree or a certificate of achievement in Spanish, beginning in the 2024-25 school year.

The expanded program is geared towards incoming freshmen who are strongly motivated academically and ready to commit to taking rigorous college-level classes and follow the course of study for all four years of the program.

The Early College Academy Associates Degree Pathway (ECA-ADP) program is available only to Pioneer High students. There is no cost for students who are accepted into the program, with tuition, books and fees all covered. All courses are taught by Río Hondo College professors after school on the Pioneer High campus. All credits earned through ECA-ADP will be transferable to any public college or university in California.

“The ECA-ADP is a wonderful way for our students to get a head start on college, not just in earning credits, but also by helping students gain confidence in their ability to succeed in college,” Principal Mary Chapman said. “Additionally, the ECA-ADP eases the financial burden of college significantly. We are thrilled to be able to provide this opportunity to our Pioneer High students.”

Classes for ECA-ADP are available during fall, spring and summer terms. Zoom meetings for middle school students and families interested in learning more about the program are scheduled for: Wednesday, Feb. 7 at 4 p.m.; Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 9 a.m.; and Thursday, Feb. 15 at 6 p.m. Those interested are encouraged to reach out to Pioneer High directly at (562) 698-8121 ext. 5000 for more information.

Based on Río Hondo College enrollment fees of \$46 per unit, if a Pioneer High student completes 60 units in high school, they will save approximately \$5,000 in tuition and additional fees, as well as saving on transportation and living expenses.

Incoming freshmen have several enrollment and academic options including earning a certificate of achievement in Spanish (18 units); an associate degree for transfer in Spanish (64 units); or up to 60 college credits toward an associate degree while earning their high school diploma.

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To qualify for a credit, students must earn a “C” grade or higher in all their ECA-ADP classes.

Río Hondo College will provide assistance for students who are struggling in ECA-ADP classes, with RHC counselors available to meet with students and conduct assessments, with help from Pioneer High counselors.

Enrollment for Pioneer’s Early College Academy is robust, with approximately 70 students taking college-level courses per semester. Courses include Spanish 101, Counseling 101, Astronomy 110, Administration of Justice, English 101, Speech 101, Music 139 and Chicano Studies 101. Each class earns a student at least 3 transferable units and, in some cases, 4.5 units per semester.

“Early College Academy is a popular and advantageous program for motivated students who aspire to earn a college degree and have capacity in their schedules to do the extra coursework,” Superintendent Dr. Monica Oviedo said. “We are excited to see Pioneer High make the commitment to providing its students with a direct pathway to obtain a degree while they earn their high school diplomas.”

PHOTO CAPTION

WUHSD_EARLYCOLLEGE1: A Pioneer High School student utilizes the school’s College Center to explore college and career opportunities. Pioneer High is expanding its Early College Academy Associates Degree Pathway partnership with Río Hondo College to include an opportunity for new students to earn an associate degree or a certificate of achievement in Spanish, beginning in the 2024-25 school year.

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OUR MISSION:

The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

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