



**For Immediate Release**

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## **CHRISTEL HOUSE ACADEMY SOUTH EARNS EARLY COLLEGE ENDORSEMENT**

The Center of Excellence in Leadership of Learning (CELL) at the University of Indianapolis has announced the endorsement of the Early College (EC) program at Christel House Academy South as highly effective. "The vast majority of Christel House graduates engage in dual credit classes and all students earn acceptance into a 4-year collegiate institution," says Carey Dahncke, Head of Schools. "This model has been the foundation for the Christel House Academy high school program. We're honored to receive formal recognition in the 2019 academic year."

The Early College high school model creates small schools that are designed to give students jumpstarts on the rest of their lives. Students can earn both high school diplomas and up to two years of credit toward bachelor's or associate degrees. While open to all students, Early College programs specifically serve low-income young people, first-generation college students, English language learners and students of color – all statistically underrepresented in higher education.

To be considered for endorsement, the school prepared a portfolio that addressed the eight required principles established by CELL including providing a rigorous curriculum, robust student supports and completion data. In addition, a CELL team visited the school to interview administration, teachers, students and parents about the EC and its benefits and challenges before designating the program as endorsed.

"These newly-endorsed Early College High Schools have documented evidence of quality programs that help high school students graduate high school and accelerate into post-secondary education, whether at a four-year institution or a career/technical program. These students' accomplishments are true game-changers for them and their families!" said Sandy Hillman, CELL director of Early College.

CELL, at the University of Indianapolis, is a leading convener, catalyst and collaborator for dynamic, innovative education change in Indiana. It has trained over 120 high schools across the state in the fundamentals of Early College and endorsed 22 as of the end of 2018. Once a school receives endorsement, it is expected to further develop its opportunities and will be reviewed for re-endorsement every three years.

### **About Christel House Schools**

Established as a public charter school in 2002, Christel House Schools (CHS) today operates multiple charter schools in Indianapolis—CHA South, serving at-risk students in grades K-12; CHA West currently serving grades K-6, and an adult high school - Christel House DORS South, Christel House DORS West and Christel House IvyTech. CHS provides a holistic human development approach that focuses on building strong character to complement each student's rigorous academic foundation. Through its College & Careers program, CHS continues to support its graduates through post-secondary education and job placement so they become self-sufficient, contributing members of society.

Christel House Academy South was Indiana's first charter school to receive the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform's "School to Watch" designation. Additional recognition includes the Indiana Achievement and Breakthrough Schools Awards. It has also been named a 2018 National School of Character by Character.org. For more information, please visit [www.chacademy.org](http://www.chacademy.org).

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