Educational Plan
A.2 Target Population

Student Population and Improving Pupil Achievement in the Community

The Early Career Academy is a career-focused charter high school for grades 11 and 12 in which students have the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and a tuition-free associate's degree at the same time.

The proposed school in Tempe, AZ, will operate inside of an ITT Tech campus where students will have access to the substantial facilities and services available to ITT Tech's college students. ITT Tech is one of the nation's largest providers of associate's degrees in career-oriented fields and currently has over 60,000 students in over 140 campus locations around the country.

The Early Career Academy programs of study are designed to educate students with specific practical skills that are in use today in a wide variety of employer organizations. The programs of study blend traditional academic content with applied learning concepts, with a significant portion devoted to practical study in a lab environment. The programs include a Student Professional Experience where students work on a real project for a community organization. These projects relate to the students field of study. As examples, students may find themselves creating a website for a consulting firm or installing and configuring a computer network for a non-profit. These projects allow students to apply the knowledge they have gained in the program to solve real-world problems. This experience also allows students to work in a team and develop leadership, communication and project management skills. These skills are critical for career success.

The primary focus on pupil achievement at the Early Career Academy will be mastery of Arizona College and Career Ready standards. Additional focus will be placed on earning post-secondary credits and / or credentials, and career-readiness, as measured by employment outcomes of the ECA's graduates.

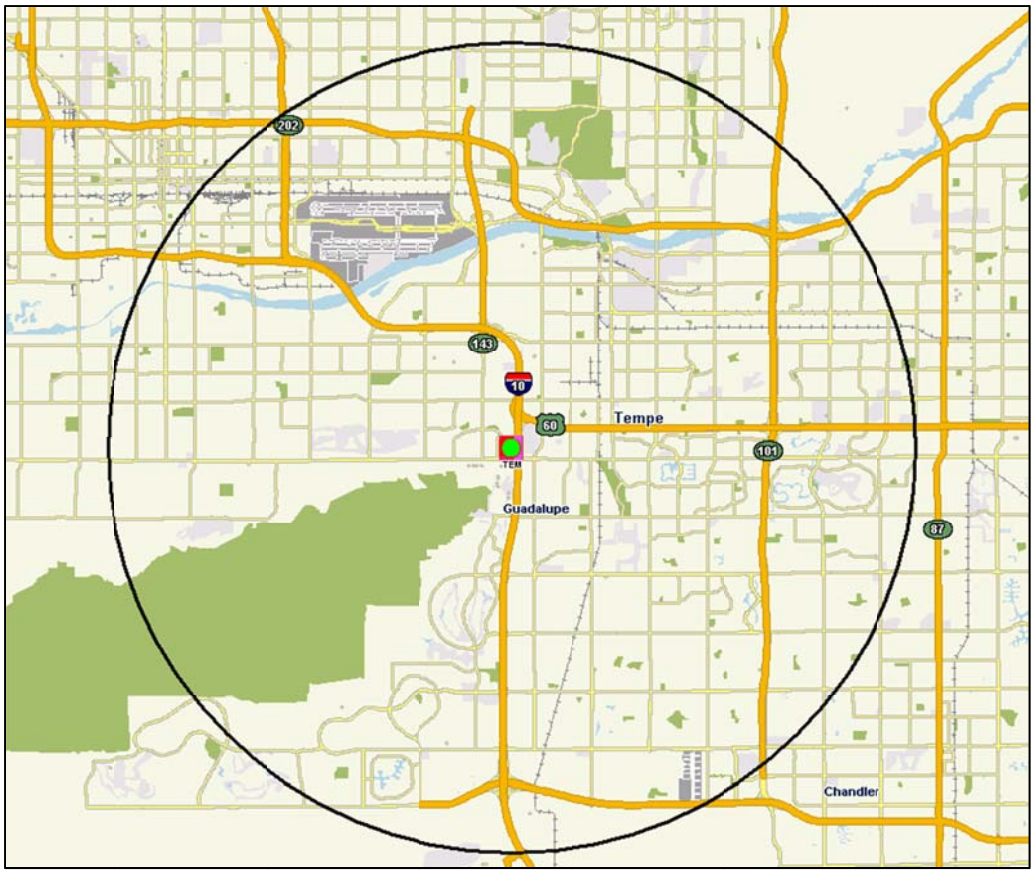
Area Population Description[1]

The area to be served is an approximate seven mile radius around ITT Technical Institute – Tempe, which is located at 5005 S Wendler Drive, Tempe, AZ 85282. A map of the area is shown if Figure A.2.1.

The population in this area is estimated to change from 527,381 to 531,698, resulting in a growth of 0.82% between 2010 and the current year. Over the next five years, the population is projected to grow by 2.26%.

[1] Area population statistics taken from 2013 Projection Year U.S. Census data, provide through Nielsen PrimeLocation Geographic Information

Figure A.2.1: Target Geographic Area



Of this area's current year estimated population: 64.8% are White Alone, 8.1% are Black or African Am. Alone, 3.6% are Am. Indian and Alaska Nat. Alone, 4.5% are Asian Alone, 0.3% are Nat. Hawaiian and Other Pacific Isl. Alone, 14.6% are Some Other Race, and 4.1% are Two or More Races. The area's Hispanic and Latino population comprises 33.9% of the total.

Currently, it is estimated that 11.6% of the population age 25 and over in this area have earned a Master's, Professional, or Doctorate Degree, 20.2% have earned a Bachelor's Degree, and 7.7% have earned an Associate's Degree. This leaves approximately 60% of the population age 25 and over with educational attainment less than an Associate degree. For the Hispanic and Latino population in the same area, only 34% have any education beyond high school.

Further, the average household income is projected to decrease by 8.1% over the next five years, from $55,235 to $50,763. Median household income is projected to decrease 10.1% over the same time period, from $40,441 to $36,390. The situation for the Hispanic or Latino population is even worse, with median income for Hispanic or Latino households projected to decrease from $30,654 to $28, 259 over the next 5 years. Increasing the number of post-secondary degrees among the area's population will help to curb these negative income trends, as post-secondary credentials increase earning potential.

The Early Career Academy can serve the community by offering a free career-focused Associate's Degree to area high school students, offering opportunities to increase education attainment and, in turn, increase income potential.

Area High Schools

The schools offered for comparisons are the non-charter, non-alternative within approximately a seven mile radius (see table below and graphic of geographic area).

Table A.2.1: Area High Schools

School Name	Distance	Location Address	Location City	State	Zip
TEMPE HIGH SCHOOL	2.7	1730 SOUTH MILL AVE	TEMPE	AZ	85281
MARCOS DE NIZA HIGH SCHOOL	3.0	6000 SOUTH LAKESHORE DR	TEMPE	AZ	85283
MCCLINTOCK HIGH SCHOOL	3.8	1830 EAST DEL RIO DR	TEMPE	AZ	85282
MOUNTAIN POINTE HIGH SCHOOL	3.9	4201 EAST KNOX RD	PHOENIX	AZ	85044
SOUTH MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL	5.6	5401 SOUTH 7TH ST	PHOENIX	AZ	85040
DOBSON HIGH SCHOOL	6.1	1501 WEST GUADALUPE	MESA	AZ	85202
DESERT VISTA HIGH SCHOOL	6.3	16440 SOUTH 32ND ST	PHOENIX	AZ	85048

There are also several charter high schools and two alternative high schools in the geographic area of focus, but it is believed that ECA will provide educational opportunities that are unique and will appeal primarily to portions of the student populations at regular high schools in the area, where the majority of students attend. Data for the regular public high schools in the area are listed in the tables below.

Table A.2.2: Basic School Enrollment Data[2]

School	District or Charter	Grades Served	Enrollment (Oct. 2013)	Free and Reduced Lunch	Special Education
Tempe High School	Tempe Union High School District	9-12	1,467	67%	9.9%
Marcos De Niza High School	Tempe Union High School District	9-12	1,651	36%	12.7%
McClintock High School	Tempe Union High School District	9-12	1,837	33%	6.5%
Mountain Pointe High School	Tempe Union High School District	9-12	2,640	23%	10.0%
South Mountain High School	Phoenix Union High School District	9-12	1,729	83%	8.5%
Dobson High School	Mesa Unified District	9-12	2,705	52%	9.0%
Desert Vista High School	Tempe Union High School District	9-12	3,070	8%	12.1%
	Average			**43.1%**	**9.8%**

Table A.2.2: Race-Ethnicity Enrollment Data[3]

School	Grades Served	Asian	Am. Indian	Black	Hispanic	White	Other Pacific Islander	Multi-Race Non Hisp
Tempe High School	9-12	3.4%	4.4%	8.5%	40.4%	42.8%	0.0%	0.5%
Marcos De Niza High School	9-12	0.7%	1.5%	17.4%	76.3%	2.9%	0.0%	1.2%
McClintock High School	9-12	9.6%	0.0%	7.3%	15.0%	64.2%	0.0%	3.9%
Mountain Pointe High School	9-12	0.0%	10.8%	11.4%	44.3%	30.9%	0.0%	2.6%
South Mountain High School	9-12	4.8%	5.5%	9.9%	42.1%	37.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Dobson High School	9-12	3.7%	0.0%	18.4%	29.0%	43.3%	0.0%	5.7%
Desert Vista High School	9-12	2.2%	3.9%	11.6%	68.3%	11.3%	0.9%	1.8%
	Average	**3.5%**	**3.7%**	**12.1%**	**45.1%**	**33.3%**	**0.1%**	**2.2%**

[2] Enrollment data from 2013-2014 Arizona Department of Education reports
[3] Enrollment data from 2013-2014 Arizona Department of Education reports

Table A.2.3: School Performance Data[4]

School	AZ A-F Rating	AIMS Math % Passing (2015 Cohort)	AIMS Reading % Passing (2015 Cohort)	AIMS Science % Passing (2015 Cohort)	Median Student Growth Percentile (SGP) Math	Median Student Growth Percentile (SGP) Reading
Tempe High School	A	68%	84%	36%	72	56
Marcos De Niza High School	B	64%	85%	49%	46	54.5
McClintock High School	A	77%	90%	60%	72	58
Mountain Pointe High School	A	75%	90%	59%	55	56
South Mountain High School	C	44%	72%	23%	53	45.5
Dobson High School	B	67%	87%	42%	46	45
Desert Vista High School	A	90%	96%	74%	72	60
Average		**69%**	**86%**	**49%**	**59.4**	**53.6**

The preceding school data demonstrates that the regular (non-charter, non-alternative) high schools in the target area are currently serving the student population well with respect to achievement of state standards. Of the seven area high schools four have letter grades of A, two have letter grades of B and one has a letter grade of C. The Early Career Academy will add to the educational options landscape, with an opportunity for 11th and 12th graders to pursue an Associate's Degree concurrently with the completion of the their high school diploma.

The target student population for Early Career Academy will be those students who:

1) Are in Grades 11 or 12 (as classified by the sending high school)
2) Prefer a nontraditional high school experience
3) Excel in environments where they can be active learners and where hands-on and applied activities are prevalent
4) Who wish to be challenged with college coursework
5) Are interested in earning a career-oriented associate degree in a technology-related filed to either pursue a career or to enable further postsecondary education

The ECA is prepared to serve all students who select the school; however, it is believed that the value proposition will attract primarily career-focused students. <u>This particular opportunity does not exist currently in the geographic area and would offer a new option for career-focused students focused on achieving credentials and entering the workforce.</u>

[4] AIMS data from Arizona Department of Education Assessment Reports; SGP data calculated by the Arizona Charter Schools Association based on 2013 AIMS data received from the Arizona Department of Education.

Meeting the Needs of the Target Population through the Program of Instruction

The curriculum for the ECA will be a college-level Associate's degree program in a technology-oriented field. Network Systems Administration and Software Development Technology are the programs of study that are planned to be offered at the school's inceptions. The curricula will be modified to meet high school graduation standards for Arizona. The focus of the curriculum is on career preparation, atop a strong foundation of core concepts in general education. ECA will meet all high school curriculum requirements under Arizona state law. Students will take a mix of core general education courses and technical courses in each of six trimesters.

As a school focused on career preparation, student achievement at ECA will be measured by academic progress and career-related measures as well. State goals for student achievement will be addressed with high-quality instruction that will generally exceed prescribed standards. The career focus of the ECA and outcomes for students will be the best way to measure success in meeting the needs of the target population and area community.

Teacher - Student Ratios

The target maximum teacher-student ratio will be 1:30 in standard program classes. The majority of these classes will be fulfilling both high school graduation requirements and college credit simultaneously. In the event of any required credit recovery (e.g. students starting at the ECA in 11th who have not completed Algebra I), class sizes will be smaller and administered using blended learning technologies, and, if needed, with a partner school.

Class size of 30 meets the needs of the target population in several ways. This size increases the likelihood that classes are balanced with students at varying levels of ability. Students that struggle with content will not be alone; students that move easily through content will not be alone and so forth. The idea here is that discouraged students will not thrive and this class size reduces that risk. When class size is too small, it becomes too easy for students to feel they are the only one at their level for this course. With this class size, teachers can provide differentiated instruction to small groups of students. This also allows teachers to create different and balanced groups for projects or activities and easily create new groups for subsequent activities.

These two general approaches offer the accelerated learning and career education that most students at ECA will be seeking out, while offering structured remediation and credit recovery to students whose goals are primarily to fulfill high school graduation requirements in Arizona.