



North Adams Community Schools

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News Release
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Bellmont High School Introduces “Early College High School” Concept to North Adams Board

Scot Croner, Belmont High School Principal and Jeannie Smith, Belmont High School Adult Education and Testing Coordinator, made a presentation at the July 14th North Adams school board meeting demonstrating Belmont High School’s progress towards becoming an Early College High School. “Early College High Schools are designed to afford students the opportunity to earn up to two years of college credit while completing a high school diploma. In many cases, students are able to graduate high school with an associate’s degree,” stated Jeannie Smith. Although ECHS’s were originally designed to assist first generation college-goers, Smith and Croner believe this model can be used to assist all Belmont High School students. “This can be accomplished at little or no extra costs to North Adams because the courses and teachers are already in place,” said Smith.

During the presentation, Mrs. Smith presented the different ways students can earn college credit through course offerings at Belmont High School. Smith stated, “Students have an opportunity to earn credit through one of our Advanced Placement

courses or through one of our Dual Credit course agreements with Ivy Tech and IPFW.” Currently Belmont High School offers 9 Advanced Placement Courses in the areas of Biology, Calculus (2 levels), Language and Composition, Literature and Composition, Chemistry, Psychology, US Government, and US History. Last year 60 college credit hours were earned by students through the AP credit program. Smith went on to say that they were also planning on adding AP World History and AP Physics for the 2009 – 2010 school year.

Through a dual credit agreement with IPFW, 34 Belmont students earned 114 college credits in Calculus or Psychology. Students also have the opportunity to earn college credits in up to 15 different courses through a dual credit agreement with Ivy Tech. Many of these dual credit courses are part of the Area 18 vocational program. Last year, 118 Belmont High School students and 50 students from Adams/Wells high schools traveled to BHS to take advantage of these opportunities. These students earned 754 college credits.

“With open-enrollment and school choice, we as educators need to start asking ourselves why should a student choose to attend our school,” said Croner. “At Belmont, students can earn over a year’s worth of college credit. This equates to a tremendous savings for both parents and students.” Smith and Croner went on to say that BHS plans to continue to work with Ivy Tech and expand their dual credit offerings next year to include more academic courses. Anatomy and Physiology and Project Lead the Way have already been added to the dual credit course offerings for next year.