Removing Barriers to Higher Education

Early Colleges are small high schools affiliated with universities and community colleges that target first-generation college students, students at risk of dropping out of high school, and students who would benefit from accelerated learning opportunities. These students have the opportunity to graduate with both a high school diploma as well as an associate degree or up to two years of transferrable college credit. Numerous research studies have found that early college students are more likely to graduate from high school, more likely to enroll in postsecondary education, and more likely earn a postsecondary credential.¹
Challenge: The Early College Network is composed of principals, counselors, college liaisons, and teachers from participating early college high schools. The group convenes regularly to share knowledge around common problems facing early college practitioners.

Customized Support: The Network aims to:
1. increase leader effectiveness through shared learning and peer support around problems of practice
2. use data to support network improvement
3. leverage the collective voice and expertise of the network to influence ECHS policy and practice.

Results: RTI facilitates regular network convenings, each focused on a specific topic of interest defined by network members. Recent examples include: how to maximize partnership agreements and MOUs; marketing early college; new staff onboarding approaches; and early college design principles.

RTI also organizes group study visits, provides topic-based research briefs, hosts expert speakers, and conducts group webinars at the request of members.