



Frequently Asked Questions - EPIC Registration

1. Do you accept Gifted students?

Yes, our academic classes include Gifted, Honors, and College Prep level courses. Our teachers instruct at the Honors/Gifted level but have built-in scaffolding and differentiation for all levels of students.

2. Can my student still take AP classes?

Definitely. Students can take AP classes outside of EPIC as early as the 9th-grade year depending on their interests. EPIC does not stop a student from taking an AP class. If you have specific questions about an AP course working with an EPIC schedule please contact Lacey Jakes at Lacey.Jakes@gcpsk12.org.

3. Is EPIC right for my student?

EPIC is an innovative way to learn where three academic classes are taught in a cross-curricular method with STEM/Engineering. EPIC includes many different strategies including project-based learning, hands-on experiences, discovery, and problem solving/inquiry-based learning. EPIC students have 7 courses total, whereas a traditional student will have 6 courses total. Students will complete the Engineering Pathway in the EPIC program and are able to select the same number of electives as traditional students each year. We find one of the key factors to student success in EPIC is a willingness to take initiative.

4. Does my student have to be in EPIC for all 4 years of high school?

EPIC includes four classes each year for the first three years in the program, 9th - 11th grade. During the 12th grade year, EPIC students will have a multitude of options such as AP courses, Dual Enrollment, Capstone Project or an Internship. The EPIC program is intentionally planned and executed so students can complete the Engineering pathway and experience STEM opportunities. We pair courses together that work well to support a learning experience that creates problem solvers and creative thinkers. If a student in EPIC would like to discuss their experiences we will plan a parent, teacher, and counselor conference. This team will help plan and make adjustments to ensure we determine what is best aligned to the student's future goals.

5. Does the Engineering class take away from my student being able to take other electives?

No! The Engineering elective is an extra class in the student's schedule. EPIC students still have the same number of elective spaces as any other student in the high school. EPIC courses are completed during the junior year and since students have more credits towards graduation than a traditional student, the senior year provides greater flexibility for electives.

6. Does EPIC mean the student will not see any friends outside of EPIC?

Not at all. EPIC students will have lunch and 3 traditional MCHS classes. This allows for a student in EPIC to still spend half of the day having an opportunity to experience the traditional MCHS life.

7. Can I still take band, orchestra, play football, or participate in extracurricular activities if I am in EPIC?

Many of our students are active in extracurricular activities, sports, and clubs. EPIC students participate in marching band, orchestra, chorus, theater, art, football, track, softball, basketball, and more!



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8. Does EPIC prepare my students for college?

Absolutely. EPIC believes in preparing students for the 21st-century skills necessary for college and career. This includes critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, flexibility, and communication. In addition, the project based units within EPIC give students many opportunities to collaborate with community and business leaders and build a meaningful portfolio they can use during the college application process.

9. What is the requirement to get into EPIC?

Students must apply and be recommended by their 8th grade math teacher for Geometry, Geometry Gifted, Accelerated Geometry, or Accelerated Geometry Gifted. If you have questions about your child's math recommendation as it relates to math rigor and expectations in EPIC, please contact Elizabeth Leonard at Elizabeth.Leonard@gcpsk12.org

10. Do interested students have to write an essay as part of the application?

There is a portion of the application where students are asked to write an essay but there are alternative options and the students are welcome to tell us about themselves in a method of their choice. In the past students have submitted videos, presentations, mind maps, and a variety of other options - use your imagination!

11. What is the difference between EPIC Engineering and the Engineering electives listed within Career and Technical Education (CTE) department?

The three engineering courses of the Engineering Pathway (Foundations, Concepts, and Applications) have the same course standards in both EPIC and CTE with the difference occurring in how the course is incorporated into the student's schedule. Outside of EPIC, students take the Engineering courses as one of their elective choices. Within EPIC, the Engineering course is an additional course added into the student's schedule and it is taught throughout the Language Arts, Math, and Science class periods which allows the Engineering assignments, activities, and projects to reinforce those academic classes. EPIC students will be able to choose the same number of electives as traditional students since the engineering course is built into their EPIC schedule. In addition, the EPIC teachers collaborate and plan together to ensure that the cross-curricular approach provides a relevant experience for students. The Engineering courses in the CTE department and in EPIC are both hands-on and project-based. All Engineering courses at Mill Creek will take the same county assessments at the end of the year and the same End of Pathway Assessment at the end of all three courses.

12. Does this mean my student will be in the same classroom for half the day with the same students?

No! Students still rotate classrooms and will also rotate how their classes are paired together within EPIC. Each day within EPIC looks different - one day might find students working with Spheros tied to Geometry and the Engineering Design Process but another day might have them seeing each teacher separately for shorter periods of time.

Still have questions? Email Kelly Dyar at kelly.dyar@gcpsk12.org

Quotes from current 9th grade EPIC students:

"It helps me grow and learn how to work better as a team. The ability to have hands-on learning is really empowering."

"It allows me to be more involved with other students and learn not only information but how to communicate and work in a team. It also allows me to do more hands-on activities, and learn in many different ways."

"It is challenging me and teaching me to always give 100% effort in and out of the classroom."

"I like the EPIC program and I think the project-based learning is helping me apply what I learn."