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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Simon's Rock Awarded Early College Full School Impact Planning Grant of \$150,000 to Partner with Southern Berkshire Regional School District**

GREAT BARRINGTON, MA—Simon's Rock recently announced that the institution was awarded an Early College Full School Impact Planning Grant of \$150,000 from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

"The purpose of this competitive grant is to provide significant planning and resources to support a district and/or high school and college partner in designing and developing an impactful, large scale, or "full school" immersive Early College program model." The grant will support a three-year pilot program for Simon's Rock to partner with Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) to develop a shared immersive whole-school model Early College program beginning in fall 2022 ([Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#)).

The whole-school model partnership was specifically created for Mount Everett Regional High School (MERHS) and draws upon elements from Simon's Rock and Bard Early Colleges. Simon's Rock has partnered with SBRSD since the fall of 2019 in providing students at MERHS with the opportunity to take Early College courses and earn credits towards their associate degrees while still enrolled in public education. In the whole-school model, which is the first whole school partnership in Massachusetts in a rural district, students at MERHS will have increased educational opportunities in a school district with only one comprehensive high school option. The Simon's Rock and MERHS whole-school partnership is an innovative approach for rural students, who have been underserved by Early Colleges, and can be a model for small comprehensive districts, particularly rural ones.

The curriculum in the Simon's Rock and MERHS whole-school model draws from Simon's Rock courses such as "Mathematics and its Applications" and "Philosophical Problems," as well as the Pathways to the American College Experience (PACE) program, College Experiential Learning & Research Workshops from Bard High School Early Colleges in Newark and Cleveland, and the Civic Engagement Capstone from Bard Early College Hudson. The whole-school model will blend Early College with career pathways and includes 3+ credit levels for 5 different pathway options with only 35-50 students per grade. Teacher training will also be provided through the Early College Research Institute to further expand Early College access.

The Bard College network has 8 high schools that utilize the Early College model in urban areas including New York City, Cleveland, Baltimore, Washington D.C, New Orleans, and the Hudson

Valley. As the founding site of Early College, Simon's Rock is leading the future in building rural Early College access.

## **About Simon's Rock**

[Bard College at Simon's Rock](#) is the only college in the country specifically designed for highly motivated students ready to enter college after the 10th or 11th grade. Simon's Rock offers a challenging program in the liberal arts and sciences, taught exclusively in small seminars by supportive, highly trained faculty, who are leading scholars in their fields. The College grants degrees in more than 35 majors. The Princeton Review's *Best 380 Colleges* rates academics at Simon's Rock higher than Harvard and Princeton.

[Bard Academy at Simon's Rock](#) is the nation's first two-year boarding and day program designed to prepare 9th and 10th graders to start college early. A student entering Bard Academy as a high school freshman will earn an Associate of Arts degree from Bard College at Simon's Rock after only four years and a Bachelor of Arts degree after only six years. The Academy curriculum is designed and taught by students' future college professors who are leading scholars in their fields.

For more information, visit [simons-rock.edu](http://simons-rock.edu) and [bardacademy.simons-rock.edu](http://bardacademy.simons-rock.edu).

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