

Running Start

Parent/Student Handbook



Rainier High School
2023-2024

Introduction: What is Running Start?

The Washington State Legislature adopted policies and procedures (QAC 392-169) that provide **eligible** high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to enroll full or part-time in a community or technical college while earning both high school and college credit. ***High school students are expected to do the same college-level work as their college classmates and be graded by the same standards.*** The decision to participate should be made only after ***careful consideration*** of the potential benefits and detractions.

This handbook is intended to provide the necessary information to assist parents and students with this important decision.

The **Running Start (RS) program** is an exciting option for RHS students, **but does have some risks.** To limit confusion and misunderstandings we are asking all parents and students to **read this entire handbook** and fill out this [Google form](#) verifying their understanding of the program.

Eligibility Requirements

- The student must be **registered at Rainier High School**. Homeschool and private school students registered with the school district must register for Running Start through Rainier High School. ***Homeschool students*** must also complete an RSD Intent to Homeschool form.
- The student must be in **grade 11 or 12** (as determined by the registrar at the time of enrollment at RHS).
- ***Some colleges may have additional entrance requirements.*** It is your responsibility to check with the college you plan to attend.
- The student must meet ***minimum proficiency standards*** for ***college placement*** in English and/or mathematics prior to college acceptance.
- You must be ***willing to work hard***, demonstrate ***commitment*** to the program, ***be mature enough*** to attend classes with people of all ages.
- ***Rainier High School and District requires*** all Running Start students be enrolled full-time between high school and college.
- Student or parents/guardians must provide transportation; RSD does not provide transportation!

Advantages of Running Start

- Class discussions offer a **wider range of topics** and more **diverse points of view**.
- There are typically **no tuition** costs. This is a substantial savings for earning college credit!
- **Dual credit**—i.e., you may earn high school credit and college credit for the **same class**.
- You may take classes **not offered** in the Rainier School District.
- You will experience community or technical college while still in high school.

Is Running Start for me?

- You are **more likely to succeed** if you have a minimum cumulative GPA of **3.0 or above**, earned a **“B” or better in sophomore English**, and have **placed into English 101 or above** via college assessment/testing.
- Running Start is a **commitment**. It is **difficult** to **transition** back to **high school** or into the **college mid-year**. RHS is on a **semester** system, while the college is on a **quarter** system.
- There may be **scheduling conflicts** between the two schools. When you have a conflict in your schedule, try to negotiate it. If you are unable to reach a compromise, **your high school class will be your priority**.
- You must complete all RS procedures and meet with the RHS Counselor and college advisers **prior to the end of the school year**. **You will not have the opportunity to register during the summer.** If you have not **registered for RS classes by the start of RHS school year, you will be placed into a full high school schedule at RHS and will be required to attend** - **REMINDER**, you must be enrolled full-time between both schools.

Steps to Get Started

1. **Apply** online to either [South Puget Sound Community College](#) or [Centralia College](#). You ***must know your social security number*** and enter it into the application, otherwise, your participation in the program could be delayed.

Please enter ***"Fall quarter, 2023"*** in the drop-down box inside the application when prompted.

2. About a ***week*** after submitting your online application, you should **receive an email confirming your acceptance** to community college - **this does not guarantee Running Start eligibility!**

Inside the body of your acceptance email, you will be given a ***Student ID Number***. Make sure you follow all the steps in this email!

3. Make an appointment with the RHS Counselor to discuss your plan for completing high school graduation requirements through the Running Start program.
4. You will be issued a [Running Start Verification Form \(RSVF\)](#) for the quarter you plan to start. **Note: Your RHS [Running Start Participation Agreement](#) must also be submitted to the Counselor by May 15th!**
5. Once you have **registered for classes** at the college (late May), **email or bring a copy** of your college schedule to the RHS Counselor, along with your RSVF ***filled out and signed*** by you and your parent/guardian.
6. It is **your responsibility** to submit the signed RSVF to the community college ***on time***, otherwise, you could be dropped from college classes or be charged tuition!

⇒ **IMPORTANT!** If a student who qualifies for Running Start ***has not registered*** for college classes by the ***first day of school at RHS***, they will be placed into a **full schedule at RHS**, be required to attend RHS, and ***will be considered RHS students***.

Important Information!

- In order to receive a RHS diploma, students must ***meet all RHS graduation requirements.***
- An RHS ***High School & Beyond Plan (state graduation requirement)*** will be required of all running start seniors—***see the RHS Counseling website*** for details.
- A minimum level of success is expected of all running start students. If the student **falls below a 2.0 GPA** they will be placed on ***academic alert (quarter 1), academic probation (quarter 2)*** by the college. ***If by the end of the 3rd quarter student grades are not above the 2.0 minimum, the student will not be allowed to continue Running Start and will be prohibited from attending the college for 1– academic year. Earning high school credits could be affected by falling below academic standards!***
- Any ***RHS senior*** planning to participate in the Rainier High School Graduation ceremonies and/or receive their RHS diploma must ***provide pertinent information requested from the senior advisor*** in September. In addition, it's the ***responsibility of the senior*** to keep informed of important dates, cap and gown orders, rehearsal and senior checkout procedures. Running Start students are required to follow the ***RHS Counseling Center Google Classroom and check their RHS email account regularly*** as they include important dates/reminders.
- Students who wish to earn an RHS diploma must complete **RHS graduation requirements** above college AA degree requirements, and will be reminded to do so each quarter by the RHS Counselor!
- It is the ***responsibility of the student*** wishing to earn an AA Degree from the college, to ***determine requirements and how to apply for the degree.*** The RHS Counselor will not have this information.

Spring Quarter Enrollment During Senior Year

Do not enroll in any classes required for high school graduation spring quarter of your senior year. The class ***may not be offered*** or it ***may be full***. Further, classes taken spring quarter of senior year ***will not post*** to the RHS transcript in time for graduation.

Costs

A **common misconception** of Running Start participation is that there are no costs. Running Start students are **responsible** for their own **transportation, books, supplies and fees**. The Rainier School District pays for tuition during fall, winter and spring quarters, up to 15 credits per quarter if enrolled as a **full-time** Running Start student. If you are enrolled in two or more classes at your high school the number of college credits you are eligible to take will be **less than 15 (see page 10)**.

Need financial assistance? Contact the Running Start office at the community college for possible fee waiver and/or fee reductions.

Financial Aid Now and in the Future:

Running Start students **are not eligible** for federal or state financial aid. Having earned credits as a Running Start student **will affect the length of time a student can continue to receive financial aid in the future**. Students with questions about the effect of Running Start on their student aid or scholarship packages should always check directly with college admissions, financial aid, and scholarship offices.

Running Start does not pay for college classes in the summer!

Withdrawing From a Class

Withdrawing from a class may have **serious implications** on a student's **high school graduation** status. Follow the class withdrawal procedures established by the college. **REMINDER!** Students must be **full-time enrolled** between RHS and the college throughout the academic year!!! If a student **drops a class at any time** during the quarter, they **must inform** the **RHS Counselor** to ensure they are **still on track for graduation** and maintain full-time enrollment between both schools. The RHS Counselor will schedule the student into RHS classes, and the student will be required to attend. **See page 10** of this handbook for what's considered full-time enrollment!

If a student decides to withdraw from a course, or courses, counselors at both schools must be notified immediately. **A student may need to pay for fees associated with dropped classes, may owe tuition, and may need to pay for classes they retake.**

Common Running Start Issues

- You must ***pay tuition if you exceed the maximum credits*** allowed per quarter—the RHS Counselor will determine credit maximum based on classes taken at RHS and the college.
- College credits earned prior to high school graduation ***may not transfer*** to private or out-of-state colleges. ***Check with out-of-state colleges prior to enrollment in Running Start to confirm dual credit program acceptance!***
- Instruction is at college level and provided at a ***faster pace***. There is a ***greater amount of homework*** and college faculty usually ***do not provide classroom*** time to complete assignments.
- College grades ***are calculated*** into your ***high school GPA***. Should you **do poorly or fail**, it **will lower your high school GPA**.
- Grades earned at the community college stay on ***permanent high school and college transcripts***. Should you do poorly, it could impact your plans to transfer to a four-year college.
- If you ***have not completed Algebra II*** during high school, you may not be able to take a full schedule at Running Start, which will impede your ability to earn an AA degree by end of senior year (**See page 10** of this handbook for what's considered full-time enrollment!).
- ***College and high school schedules and calendars often conflict***. Running Start in your schedule may make it difficult to participate in clubs, sports, and other activities at your high school. Vacation dates may also differ. ***You may have to attend college classes during high school winter and spring breaks***.
- If you are a ***high school athlete*** and ***fail to earn 2.5 credits*** before the end of each semester, you **may not be allowed to participate in your sport (see page 19 for details about athletic eligibility!)**.
- ***Running Start Verification Forms (RSVF)*** must be turned in on time each quarter or you will be dropped from your college courses. ***It is your responsibility*** to be aware of deadlines and give the RHS Counselor up to 3 school days to complete the form.

Other Concerns

- Many college classes **fill up before new** Running Start students can register. Your class **choices may be limited** at the start of your enrollment.
- **Technical colleges** may not offer all of the **English or history** credits required for high school graduation. Students attending technical colleges for Running Start may need to take these classes through a correspondence program, or at RHS
- The average age of a student in Washington community and technical colleges is **32 years** of age.
- **Student behavior:** Each district has independent jurisdiction over discipline, academic, and attendance matters involving participation by a Running Start student in their respective programs.
- College instructors **do not notify parents** or the high school when a student is failing or not attending a class. **A 2.0 minimum GPA** must be maintained to be in good standing at the college.
- High school officials **will not be able to inform** students or parents of **enrollment or progress** in college courses or college graduation status, nor issue high school diplomas, until college transcripts are received by the high school. **Seniors** should make sure that **all required classes for graduation are taken either fall or winter quarter of their senior year, and not spring quarter**. Failure to do so could result in the student **not being able to walk** at graduation ceremonies.
- Seniors will participate in graduation only after the college provides the high school with written assurance of credit (**see pg. 5 regarding spring enrollment for seniors**).
- Students are responsible for arranging their college class schedule so it **does not conflict** with their high school schedule. Reminder, high school courses are offered in **two semesters**. College classes are offered in **three quarters**.
- Students **may participate in sports** at the high school, **but not at the community college** Students may participate in drama or music at either the high school or the community college.

Other Concerns (continued)

- Students are responsible for determining how high school and community college courses meet two-year and four-year college requirements and requirements of specific programs; however, students should work with a **college advisor** for guidance.
- Students should **work closely** with their **college advisor** and **RHS Counselor**, to make sure they **follow the course transfer guide (see page 11)**. Unfortunately winter and spring offerings at the community college are not known until just prior to registration for the next quarter. This **inhibits full year planning** and requires that students may need to be very flexible in planning classes each quarter.
- **Online classes have a high failure rate.** Students should be cautious if choosing this option. This platform has proven to be **confusing** to many students, and can be a detriment if **you are not disciplined, have poor time-management skills** and **have a difficult time focusing**. Further, it is more difficult to connect with an online instructor than one who is in the classroom.

Athletics

- Running Start students must meet the same athletic eligibility standards that are required of any student enrolled in the Rainier School District (i.e., attendance, passing grades equivalent to 2.5 credits—**5 high school classes** or **3 college classes** to equal 13-15 college quarter credits).
- Students must meet the **Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) standard** and comply with local school attendance eligibility policies required of all other students.
- Running Start student athletes shall maintain passing grades during the **previous and current** high school semester in the equivalent of five full-time high school classes (which is the same as 2.5 high school credits).

What does it mean to be a full-time Running Start student?

Example: If you have 2 classes at the high school, you may take **two 5 credit** classes at the college (see below)

<u>High School</u>	<u>Community College</u>
6 classes	0 classes
4 classes	1 class (5 college credits)
2-3 classes	2 classes (10 college credits)
0-1 classes	3 classes (15 college credits)

Credit Equivalencies—The ratio of high school credits to community college credits (for **EACH** class):

<u>High School Credits</u>		<u>College Class Credits</u>
1.0	=	Five (5)
.80	=	Four (4)
.60	=	Three (3)
.50	=	Two and a half (2.5)
.40	=	Two (2)
.20	=	One (1)

Each of the following combinations are **equal to full-time enrollment**.

High School

Community College

6 classes

and

0 classes

4 classes

and

1 class (5 credits)

2-3 classes

and

2 classes (10 credits)

0-1 classes

and

3 classes (15 credits)

RAINER HIGH SCHOOL SPSCC Course Equivalencies 2021-2022			
Students should check with their high school Counselor for the specific credits they need to complete. Course equivalency is set by the high school. Failure to meet with your high school Counselor on a regular basis could result in not meeting high school graduation requirements. High school credit is granted at a rate of 5 college credits to 1 high school credit.			
High School Requirement	Needed HS Credit	Equiv. College Credit	SPSCC Course Options
English			
Junior	1	5	ENGL& 101
Senior	1	5	ENGL& 102
Note: If additional English credit is needed, please speak with your high school Counselor to find an appropriate course.			
Social Studies			
World History/CWP1	1	5	HIST& 126, 127 or 128
US History	1	5	HIST& 146, 147 or 148
Civics/CWP2	1	5	POLS& 201 or 202, ECON& 201 or 202, SOC& 201
Math	1	5	MATH 107+ (BUS& 104 for CTE pathway)
Note: 3rd year math course must align with your high school pathway requirements. BUS& 104 is a non-transferable quantitative courses to four year schools. AMATH 141, CMATH 107 & 146 are tuition paid by the student. Check with your HS counselor or college Ed Planner with questions.			
Science	1	5	Any course in the SPSCC Natural Sciences Distribution
Note: If transferring to a 4 year college please check with your HS counselor or college Ed Planner with questions about additional 4th year quantitative requirements.			
Health	0.5	3	PE 180
Fitness	1.5	8	NUTR& 101 or PE& 100+
Note: Note all PE classes offered at SPSCC or 5.0 credits. High School credit equivalency will be adjusted based on the amount of college credit.			
Fine Arts	2	10	ART 101+, DRMA 101+, MUSC 100+
Career and Technical	1	5	ACCT&201, AEC 101+, AUTO 100+, BUS&101+, CIS 160+, CNA 100+, CS 142, ECED 100+, EDUC 101+, FILMP 111+, MED 103, NURS 100, OFTEC 100+, WELD 100+
Note: Not all courses listed are 5 credits. Please check the SPSCC course information for specific credit values. Other courses may also be accepted. See HS counselor with course questions.			
Elective	varies	varies	Any course the student is eligible for at SPSCC

RHS Required Participation Agreement Form Information

After **reviewing this Handbook**, applying for the Running Start program at a local community college, and **after completing all steps** as outlined in this Handbook or on the RHS Counseling Center Running Start page, please **download fill out this [Google form](#)**. **This form must be on file at RHS for your student to participate in Running Start!**

Notes: