

Running Start Information

Thomas Jefferson High School



INTRODUCTION

This packet was created by the TBHS school counseling team, and adapted by TJHS counselors to help inform students about the Running Start program. Please read the entire packet before contacting your counselor for any additional questions.

WHAT IS RUNNING START?

Running Start (RS) gives high school juniors and seniors a running start on college-level classes. Those classes count twice: once towards the fulfillment of high school graduation requirements and again for college credit. It is a component of the Learning by Choice bill that allows qualified high school juniors and seniors to enroll tuition-free in college level courses (academic or vocational) at community colleges. Students have been known to earn their high school diploma and an Associate degree through RS.



ELIGIBILITY

- Must be a high school junior or senior with at least a 2.0 GPA
- Must be enrolled in a public high school
- Must pass placement test for English/Math or an alternative placement option (i.e. transcript review)

BENEFITS

01

Free college tuition!

03

Course variety (foreign languages, sciences, CTE programs, etc)

02

Advanced course work and academic challenge

04

Earn an Associates Degree while in HS

CHALLENGES

- Performing poorly could put students at risk of not graduating on time
- Scheduling challenges
- Transfer credit issues - may be of concern at private universities and out of state universities
- Books, fees, and transportation costs - may be a few hundred dollars per quarter (limited assistance available for students on free/reduced lunch)
- Performing poorly harms both high school and college transcripts (which could have financial aid ramifications)
- Fast pace and time demands of college studies (1 quarter of a college course = 1 year of a high school course, 15 college credits = 45-hour commitment each week)
- Conflicting vacations - different spring breaks, and start and end times

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is Running Start a good fit for me?

It is best to carefully consider how much time you can dedicate to the accelerated pace of college classes, and your ability to independently learn in an adult campus environment. The opportunity to attend college will be open your entire life while being a high school student is only available to you for a limited time. While the funding provided for Running Start tuition can be a major motivator, many college students receive help with expenses through other funding sources.

What is the school counselor's role with Running Start?

Your HS counselor's role in the Running Start process is to sign your Enrollment Verification Form (EVF) before each quarter. Counselors will suggest which classes the student needs to take/pass in order to meet high school graduation requirements. **Students will communicate directly with the college RS office or instructors with any college-related concerns.** *It is imperative they meet with a RS Advisor to make a two-year plan to earn their Associate along with HS requirements.*



What does it cost?

The Running Start program funds a full-time Running Start student a maximum of 21 college-level credits each quarter (Fall, Winter and Spring), and up to 10 credits for summer quarter. Any credits over 21 credits must be paid for by the student at regular tuition rates (resident or non-resident). In addition, students are responsible for books, fees (e.g. lab fees, private music lesson fee) and their own transportation. Please note that books could run between \$500 and \$900 per year for a full time RS student. An interested student who is on free or reduced lunch may get some help from the college to pay for some books and fees.

How do graduation requirements work for Running Start students?

TJHS graduation requirements do not change for Running Start students. Students must meet all FWPS graduation requirements including graduation pathways and the High School and Beyond Plan. FWPS determines which college courses will be acceptable in meeting course requirements for HS graduation. See Course Equivalency Sheet for details. The student must work closely with their high school counselor to be sure all requirements are being met. TJHS graduation requirements must be met by the end of Winter quarter senior year to participate in the graduation ceremony.

How does the credit work between college and high school?

Every 5 credits taken at the college level each quarter equals 1 credit at

the high school level. Students taking 15 credits at college for all three quarters may earn up to 9 credits as opposed to 8 credits for a student at TJHS.

How do the different academic calendars work?

The best time to enter Running Start is in the *fall quarter*. High School and college calendars do not always match up. All area community colleges operate on the quarter system with the following basic calendar:

Fall - Late September to mid December

Winter - Early January to late March

Spring - Early April to mid to late June

Students participating in both HS and college courses in the fall will have only high school courses for most of September. RS students will end their spring quarter in late June after TJHS has concluded their school year.



Can I still participate in High School activities such as clubs?

Running Start students are still a part of the TJHS student body and eligible for all high school and athletics activities. Keeping track of high school activities, college application deadlines, senior planning, and other activities is the responsibility of the RS student. This includes checking TJHS websites (TJHS Homepage, Canvas pages, etc.) as well as checking their p12 account and TJHS mail. This helps students to stay informed about special events, athletics, college applications and graduation timelines. During the school day, RS students are only allowed on campus to attend their scheduled class(es).

How are grades transferred from the Community College to the TJHS transcript?

At the end of each college quarter the college will send TJHS the grades that each student has earned in their courses. TJHS will then add the grades to their high school transcript. College and high school transcripts have different grading scales; however, the TJHS transcript needs to record the letter grade that is given to us from the sending college. Community colleges use different scales, please refer to each college's website to find out what grading scale they use.

Do I have to attend Highline?

Students have the option of attending any college they wish that participates in the Running Start program. The student is responsible for all transportation to and from the college.

Can Running Start students still play sports?

If RS students meet WIAA eligibility standards, which includes being a full time student ,they are eligible to participate in high school athletics and activities at TJHS. However, the scheduling of RS and athletics/activities can be challenging so plan ahead! Athletes must contact the athletic director for more information.



Does the college regard RS as a positive, a negative or is it neutral?

The concept of RS is at least neutral at all schools in the state. What courses (how academic, how challenging, how many) the student takes at the college will be a factor in it staying neutral or shifting to positive or negative. Students interested in independent, out-of-state schools are encouraged to consult with them. For highly selective colleges, remember their common statement on high school curriculum "we are looking for students who have taken maximum advantage of the curriculum available to them." At least some of these schools will look at courses like Honors (x) or IB sciences and math as stronger than many college courses. We recommend you contact the schools in which you are interested.

Will colleges/universities count the RS credits toward a degree at their college?

The six public universities in the state will accept the credits, as will many of the private schools in the state. How out-of-state public and private four-year colleges handle the credits may depend on the courses taken and the policies of the college itself. If receiving college credit is important, the student will want to ask specific questions to colleges they are considering. Generally, the more selective the college the less likely they are to accept the RS credits.

Can I do Running Start part-time?

Running Start should be considered a year-long commitment. While it is possible to be a part-time RS student, it is **highly discouraged** due to the following:

- Difficult to manage
- Parking and transportation issues
- Must be on time to classes

***Your HS schedule will not change to accommodate your college schedule*

What is an Enrollment Verification Form (EVF)?

The Enrollment Verification Form is the form that the counselor fills out with the classes that the student needs to take in order to meet high school graduation requirements. The student will use the college equivalency guide to determine which college classes to register for. The student will need to turn in the EVF to the college before they can register for classes.

Example:

TJHS COURSE	EQUIVILANT FOR CC
American Gov't/Civics	Political Science &101, &202, 275
Fine Art	Any 100 and above level course in Art or Music

Please note that senior RS students must have their High School and Beyond Plan completed before they are eligible to receive their Spring quarter EVF.

How does math work at college?

Appropriate math scores will be required if a student plans to enroll in college-level math or science. Courses numbered 099 or below, in any subject area, are not considered college-level, and cannot be

funded by RS. If you are currently in Geometry at TJHS, you will be required to take Algebra 2 next year at TJHS unless you wish to pay for the course at your college out of pocket. You will still be able to take 15 credits of classes at a community college while taking one class at TJHS. Students that have completed Algebra 2 with an A can take their transcript to the placement office to determine which college math course they can take. Please contact your college for further placement instructions.



STEPS TO ENROLLMENT

STEP 1

Read this packet in its entirety and sign and return the Running Start Parent/Scholar Agreement form to your counselor

STEP 2

Applications are done online on the college website. Activate your college email account and write down your college ID number. Follow the steps of enrollment on the college's Running Start website.

STEP 3

Please contact your college for placement instructions. Students may not need to take a placement test if they have a cumulative HS GPA of 3.0 or higher. Please forward your placement confirmation email from your prospective college to your counselor once you receive it.

STEP 4

Once students have completed all previous steps they can then schedule an appointment (after Spring Break) to meet with their high school counselor to complete their EVF. If students have not completed all of the previous steps they will not receive their EVF. The EVF must be completed **before every quarter** to remove the lock on the account before registering for classes at a college through Running Start.

STEP 5

Your preferred community college may require additional steps including additional paperwork, attending orientation and meeting with your Running Start counselor at the college.

STEP 6

Once you register for classes, pay your tuition and fees (if applicable) before the tuition and fee deadline. Also, make sure to research and pay for any other expenses such as textbooks, supplies, parking, etc. before classes start.

01

**SIGN RUNNING START
PARENT/SCHOLAR
AGREEMENT**

02

**APPLY TO YOUR
COLLEGE**

03

DETERMINE PLACEMENT

04

**COMPLETE THE
ENROLLMENT
VERIFICATION FORM
(EVF)**

05

**COMPLETE REMAINING
REQUIREMENTS FOR
COLLEGE**

06

REGISTER FOR CLASSES