College in the High School Handbook

Mt Spokane High School College in the High School Handbook

This handbook was created to help students and families understand how College in the High School (CiHS) courses work and what to expect. Our goal is to answer common questions, explain how CiHS compares to other college credit options, and guide students toward making choices that fit their goals, readiness, and future plans. By providing clear information and shared expectations, we hope to make the CiHS experience positive and successful for everyone involved.

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What is College in the High School (CiHS)?

The CiHS program allows high-school students to take college-level courses at their high school (or high-school campus) and earn both high-school credit and college credit simultaneously.

Key features include:

- The college course is delivered in the high school setting rather than requiring travel to a college campus.
- The high school teacher is approved by the college to deliver the college-course curriculum.
- Students who choose to register for the college credit will have an official college transcript for that course.
- The cost to students is usually minimal or none for public high school students in Washington (see section on cost).

Partner Universities at our School

Our school partners with a few different colleges and universities for CiHS courses, but our primary partners include:

Eastern Washington University (EWU) - CLICK HERE to access CiHS information from EWU university

Central Washington University (CWU) - CLICK HERE to access CiHS information from CWU university

We follow the guidelines and deadlines from these programs as published by those universities, so all stakeholders (students, families, teachers, counselors) should be aware of their requirements.

How CiHS Compares to Other Options

CiHS vs Running Start	CiHS vs Advanced Placement (AP
CiHS courses are offered on our school campus & Running Start is an off campus program.	AP courses are high-school courses that prepare students to take a standardized AP exam; college credit depends on exam score and the receiving institution.
CiHS courses are taught by a high-school teacher approved by the college; Running Start courses are taught by college faculty.	CiHS courses are college courses (or align with them); a student who registers for the college-credit option will have an actual college transcript for the course.
CiHS classes are available to students in grades 9-12; Running Start is available to students in 11th and 12th grades.	Taking CiHS means you are earning college educational credit from the partner institution (EWU or CWU) for that class, not just an AP designation.
Because CiHS is embedded in the high-school day, students can more easily remain engaged in their high-school cohort (sports, clubs, etc) rather than commuting to a college campus.	Students can take the AP exam and enroll in the CiHS course; it does not have to be one or the other, as most of our AP courses qualify for CiHS credit.

Eligibility & Registration

Eligibility	Registration
Students in grades 9-12 at a participating high school may be eligible	Students first enroll in the high-school course designated as a CiHS course.
Students must meet any prerequisites set by the college for the particular course.	If the student chooses to earn the college credit, they also register with the partner university (the school helps with this process) and complete any required forms.
Students must complete the registration/enrollment process with the college partner by the deadline. Late/retroactive registration is generally not permitted.	All students must enroll/withdraw by the dates and deadlines posted by the partner university. EWU - Drop Dates CWU - Drop Dates

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Cost to the Student/Family

For students attending a public Washington high school and earning college credit through a public university CiHS partner, there is no cost for the college credit as of September 1 2023.

Additional costs (textbooks, materials, lab fees) may still apply depending on the course and school district.

Credit & Transcript Implications

College Transcripts

When you register for the college option, the course appears on an official college transcript for the partner university (EWU or CWU) — regardless of how the student performs.

The college transcript will show the course, credits earned (if the student passes), and grade.

Passing the course leads to college credits which may transfer—subject to each receiving institution's policy and course equivalencies.

High School Credit

The high school will award credit for the course (required or elective) based on a conversion rate: e.g., one high school credit equals five university quarter credits (or three semester credits) for College in the High School courses.

The specific number of high school credits for each CiHS course will be determined by the school district and published in advance.

Transcript and GPA considerations

Because you have an official college transcript, if you registered for college credit, that course and grade become part of your college record — even though you are still in high school.

Colleges to which you apply will see the college transcript. If you later transfer or apply to another institution, that record may affect how your credits transfer and how your record is evaluated.

For the high school transcript, the course will appear as a CiHS course, and sometimes with an "AP" designation if applicable.

Note: If you register for college credit but earn a poor grade (or withdraw), the grade may still appear on the college transcript (see section below).

When Can Students Drop or Withdraw?

This is a critically important section for students, families, and staff, as the deadlines are determined by the partner universities; Mt. Spokane High School cannot withdraw a student from a course after the deadline has passed.
Please refer to these deadlines as posted by our partner universities each year. If you have a question about these dates, please contact the high school teacher or counselor.

EWU - Drop Dates
CWU - Drop Dates

What happens if you miss the deadline?

A grade of W or HW may appear on your college transcript. While a W does not affect your college GPA, it remains on your record and may be considered by future colleges or for scholarship/funding review.

If a student drops a course that includes a fee, the student may lose the option of a refund.

Should a student drop if they are earning below a B or a C?

While this decision is best made by a student and their family with counsel from the teacher/counselor, here are some factors to consider:

- A CiHS course is a college-level course, so it will typically have more rigor and higher expectations than standard high school courses.
- If a student is earning below a B (or C) midterm, it may signal that they are struggling with the pace or depth of the course. If they remain in for the college credit, they will receive the actual college grade on their college transcript. That grade can impact how well the college credit transfers or how future institutions view the student's academic record.
- If the student drops before the deadline, the student may avoid a grade of W (or avoid potential damage) and preserve their high-school transcript as is.
- If the student stays in but only for high-school credit (i.e., chooses not to register for college credit), they might avoid the college transcript implications — but that choice must be made by the registration deadline.
- Encourage students to talk with their teacher and counselor early if they're struggling. Many supports (tutoring, office hours) exist. Withdrawing or adjusting early is better than waiting, as it might be too difficult for the student to recover the grade.

Mt. Spokane High School CiHS Withdrawal Policy

- If a student is below a C with two weeks prior to the drop date (or 50-60% of work incomplete) and interventions aren't improving results, both the classroom teacher & counselor will engage in a conversation about dropping the college credit option before the college's drop deadline.
- All Withdrawals of college credit will be communicated with the student's family.
- Dropping a High School course is different from dropping the option to pursue college credit.

    - When dropping a HS course, a student must do so by the 10th day of the semester or they will have to receive an F on their transcript.
    - When dropping college credit, the student would remain in the HS course, but the student would not be eligible for the college credit, and the grade earned would not be placed on the student's college transcript.
- These guidelines are meant to help determine if a student wants to withdraw from college credit, but the student would usually remain enrolled in the high school course.

Transferability & Future Implications

College credits earned through CiHS may transfer to other colleges or universities, but each institution sets its own policy. Some may accept the credits as general-education or elective credits; others may not accept them for a specific major requirement.

Since a college transcript is created when you register for credit, it becomes part of your permanent academic record. Future institutions will see it. Poor performance (e.g., low grade or multiple withdrawals) might raise questions.

Encourage students to keep copies of their college transcript (order from university) and keep track of which credits they earn.

Pro tip: When applying to colleges, share both your high-school transcript and the college transcript from the CiHS course(s).

CiHS Roles & Responsibilities

Student responsibilities

- Register with the high school and university by deadlines (if opting for college credit).
- Stay aware of deadlines for drop/withdraw. If considering withdrawing, initiate the process before the deadline.
- Meet course requirements and maintain academic integrity (college credit means college standards).
- Communicate with the teacher/counselor if struggling.
- Request official college transcripts when needed for college applications.

Family Responsibilities

- Support student decision-making: talk about workload, challenge level, and implications of earning (or not earning) college credit.
- Review registration materials and deadlines; parent/guardian consent is often required.
- Continually monitor student progress by checking grades in PowerSchool, asking questions, and contacting school staff when necessary.

- Help your student weigh options: Is the course manageable given other commitments (activities, athletics, clubs)?
- Make sure your student understands that registration for the credit means the college transcript is created.

School Staff (counselors, administrators, teachers) Responsibilities

- Provide clear information to students/families at the beginning of the term: connect this handbook to teacher syllabi.
- Continually update the Course Guide to ensure the most current CiHS information is available at all times.
- Monitor student progress: if students struggle, flag early—advise them of the option to drop before penalty.
- Communicate and coordinate with the partner university's CiHS office concerning registration, deadlines, drop/withdrawal forms, etc.
- Ensure that students and families are made aware: registering for college credit ≠ optional after the drop deadline; actions taken after deadlines may result in a W or grade on college transcript.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. When is the last day I can drop without penalty?

Please see the Drop dates linked within this handbook and here, as they are adjusted annually based on the partner school's calendar and requirements.

- Eastern Washington University Drop Dates
- Central Washington University Drop Dates

Action step: Students/families must check the term-specific deadline at the start of the course and plan accordingly.

Q. Should I drop the college credit option if I'm earning below a B or a C?

If you're registered for college credit, you'll have a college transcript. If your grade is trending poorly, talk with your teacher/counselor immediately.

Option: Change to "high-school credit only" (if your school allows) or withdraw before the deadline, to avoid a W or poor grade on the college transcript.

The goal: Stay in if you can succeed; withdraw/change early if you are unlikely to complete at the college-course level.

Q. What happens if I don't officially drop before the deadline but stop doing work?

You may receive a "W" or be assigned a failing grade on your college transcript, depending on policy.
The grade still goes on your college transcript, and your high-school transcript shows the high-school credit and grade as usual.

Q. How is CiHS different from Running Start and AP?

Running Start: college classes taken on a college campus (or online) by 11th / 12th graders, taught by college faculty.

AP: high-school course aligned with AP exam; college credit depends on exam and college policy. AP exams cost money ($99/test or $53/test for students receiving free/reduced lunch).

CiHS: takes place in the high school, with college credit option, taught by approved high-school teacher, already embedded in high-school schedule, and is free.

Q. Will the college credits transfer to other colleges/universities?

Possibly — many colleges accept CiHS credits as general-education or electives, but each institution sets its own policy.

Safe strategy: keep the college transcript, check with future colleges about transfer equivalencies early.

Q. Are there any costs or fees I should know about?

For public high-school students in Washington registering for college credit via CiHS, there is no cost for the credit as of Sept 1, 2023.

Q. Can I take more than one CiHS course in a term/semester?

Yes, subject to scheduling, prerequisites, and your ability to manage workload.

Tips for Success

1. Talk with your counselor early: Is this course the right fit for your academic readiness, interest, and schedule?
2. Understand the syllabus: College courses often include more reading, writing, independent work, and higher expectations for rigor.
3. Stay on top of deadlines: registration, drop/withdraw, consent/approval, costs (if any).
4. Monitor your progress regularly: If you are falling behind, act early (meet with teacher, get tutoring, or consider modifying credit option).
5. Communicate with home: Families should know you're in a college-level course and the stakes (college transcript).
6. Balance workload: Because you're still in high school (and possibly in sports/activities), make sure the course fits your overall plan.
7. Keep records: After the semester ends, request your official college transcript, save it, and track credits earned.

At Mt. Spokane High School students have the opportunity to get a head start on their college journey through CiHS — high school comfort, college curriculum. It's a chance to do serious work, earn credits, and

show future colleges our students are ready. But with that opportunity comes responsibility: staying on top of deadlines, making informed decisions, and knowing the implications of registration (on college & high school transcripts). Students are encouraged to reach out to teachers, counselors, and families as their advocacy team, stay humble in their approach, and smart in their decisions.