







Running Start Information Session

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What is Running Start?

A Washington state program that allows qualified high school juniors and seniors to enroll in community college courses, **tuition free**, and earn both high school and college credit.

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Qualifications for Running Start

- Enrolled in public high school
- Be a junior or senior according to your high school
  - Rising juniors (just completed 10th grade) can do summer Running Start
- College level in English

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Academic Standards

- There is no minimum GPA for Running Start
  - However, tend to see most success with students with mostly As, some Bs on transcript
- If a student has less than a 2.5 GPA, we recommend they take a college success class their first quarter
- Most community colleges have an academic policy that requires a 2.0 minimum to stay on good academic standing
- Students are placed on warning, probation and subsequent suspension if they fall below this standard
- **Running Start grades are permanently added to your college transcript and will follow you to any college/university you transfer to (important to be prepared academically for rigor of college classes).**

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Running Start Schedule

- Students take courses fall, winter, and spring quarters (summer is optional)
- Quarter lasts around 10 weeks, college classes are fast-paced
- Full-time college class load = 15 college credits (3 classes)
  - Can take 1 high school class with full-time college class load (but not required or recommended)
- Hybrid schedule (not recommended)
  - Students can take a combination of classes at the high school and college
  - This can be difficult for scheduling
  - Colleges are on a quarter system and high schools on semesters, so schedules do not align

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Program Costs

- College level tuition is FREE within the allowed credit load!
- Students pay for books (cost depends on the book required from $0 to $300 per class), transportation and class and campus fees (fees are $100-$250 per quarter)
- Fee and book assistance is available for students who meet low income criteria (make sure and fill out the application for FRPL)

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Activities and Academic Honors

- Students can participate in sports and activities at the high school and activities but not team sports at the college
- Running Start students are eligible for all honors and awards at the college and at their high school
- Running Start students still can participate in their high school graduation ceremony if they meet FWPS graduation requirements

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Associates Degree

- Can earn an associates degree at the same time as your high school diploma
- Start at the beginning of your junior year
- Attend full-time
- Complete 90 credits of requirements
- Difficult to complete a specialized associates degree (unless not earning diploma through FWPS)

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High School Diploma

- Most Running Start students will meet FWPS graduation requirements and are eligible to walk in their high school's graduation ceremony.
- However, Running Start students have the option to earn their high school diploma through the college.
  - Students are not eligible to walk in their high school's graduation ceremony if choosing this option.
  - Students must sign an agreement if choosing this option.
  - If students change their mind, it may be too late to meet FWPS graduation requirements and they may not be eligible to earn a diploma through FWPS or walk in the graduation ceremony.

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Transferring to a Four-Year College

- In Washington, all public four year colleges/universities accept Running Start credits
  - However, they may not count towards your intended major
- Private and out of state schools vary in their acceptance of credits
- Always call the university to check

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Benefits of Doing Running Start

- FREE Tuition
- Experience a college environment
- Wide range of courses
- Academic challenge
- Personal growth/responsibility

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Things to Consider

- Expense of transportation, books and fees
- MUST be mature and independent, college is an adult learning environment
- Scheduling conflicts
  - Colleges have a different break schedule
- Classes move at a faster pace than high school
  - Often have drop in GPA about ½ point first quarter
- Students are responsible for ensuring that college courses taken through Running Start meet high school graduation requirements

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Things to Consider, continued

- Running Start students cannot be at their high school building unless they have a class, club, sport, appointment, or specific administrator approval
- Students may miss traditional college experience
- Transfer students might not have same scholarship/grant opportunities as college freshmen
- **FERPA privacy guidelines limit parent/guardian and FWPS access to student records**
  - **FERPA prevents FWPS and parent/guardian access to students' college academic standing. It is the student's responsibility to communicate to parents/guardians and school staff any changes to enrollment and failing grades.**

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What's Next?

- Review FWPS Running Start Guide and complete all Steps to Enroll, including:
  - Review eligibility requirements
  - **Thoroughly read entire Running Start Agreement with parent/guardian**
    - Initial and sign RS Agreement and submit to your school counselor
  - Schedule a meeting with your school counselor to complete your Enrollment Verification Form (EVF)
  - Fill out student portions of EVF
  - Apply for Running Start! https://apply.ctc.edu/user

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Questions?

Reach out to your high school counselor.

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