

## RUNNING START FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**DATE:** May 2019

**TO:** Interested Parties

**FROM:** Office of the Attorney General (AGO)  
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)  
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)  
State Board of Education (SBE)  
Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)  
Council of Presidents (COP)

**SUBJECT:** Running Start Program – Questions and Answers

The Legislature initiated the Running Start Program as a component of the 1990 parent and student “Choice Act” (Chapter 9, Laws of 1990, 1st Ex. Session, [RCW 28A.600.300](#) to [RCW 28A.600.400](#)). Running Start provides students an opportunity to enroll at certain institutions of higher education and earn high school and college/university credit. Running Start is offered through Washington’s 34 community and technical colleges and the following public, four-year universities:

- Washington State University
- Central Washington University
- Eastern Washington University

Junior- and Senior-year students, as determined by the local public school district, charter school or tribal compact school, have a right granted by the Legislature to participate in Running Start. The exercise of that right is subject only to minimal eligibility and procedural requirements as described in state administrative rules.

A variety of K–12 and higher education representatives and the Office of the Attorney General develop this document. The answers reflect how high schools (including private schools, homeschools and tribal compact schools), school districts, community and technical colleges and public, four-year colleges need to implement or administer various elements of Running Start in order to maintain compliance with state statutes. For the purpose of this document, the term “college” refers to Washington’s community and technical colleges and public, four-year universities.

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The applicable statutes are [Chapters 28A.600.300 – 400 RCW](#). (Running Start laws), [RCW 28A.150.260](#) (Allocation of state funding law), [RCW 28A.150.290](#) (Law stating OSPI must make rules), and [RCW 28B.50.535](#) (SBCTC law on high school diplomas). Implementation rules are in [Chapter 392.169 WAC](#) (OSPI’s Running Start rules).

# **RUNNING START PROGRAM**

## **Questions and Answers**

**August 2018**

### **Office of the Attorney General (AGO)**

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)  
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC)  
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## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **Attendance**

**Q1. May a high school or school district require that one of its public high school students attend the high school for the purpose of completing non-credit requirements such as a High School & Beyond Plan or other local district non-credit graduation requirement?**

**A.** It depends. Students who are seeking a high school diploma from a public school district, charter school or tribal compact school must meet all requirements of the state and the district/school.

*Note: The intent of Running Start law is to encourage maximum student access to the Running Start program. Districts/Schools should not adopt policies and procedures that intentionally create barriers to student participation in the program. For example, requiring daily or weekly attendance in a High School and Beyond Plan class would logically hinder Running Start participation. Districts that have such requirements are strongly encouraged to offer accommodations to students participating in Running Start.*

Students who are not specifically seeking a high school diploma from a public school district, charter school or tribal compact school may choose to refrain from completing the district's/school's specific graduation requirements and focus on earning the credits needed to receive a diploma through the college. Also see Q73, Q74 and Q76

**Q2. If a student is full-time at the college and not taking any courses at the high school, but s/he qualifies for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch, can the student come to the high school for breakfast and/or lunch even though they are not attending any classes at the high school?**

**A.** No. Based on the federal Food and Nutrition Service rules and OSPI's Child Nutrition Program, to be eligible to receive a school meal, the student must be enrolled in a school and must participate in an integral part of the high school curriculum at a time that requires the student to be in the school when meal service is provided. (The legal citation for this federal requirement is [7 CFR 210](#).)

In other words, a student must attend a class at the high school before and/or after the high school's meal service period to have access to the meal service.

**Q3. If a student has completed state graduation requirements, but has not yet graduated, and drops out of any courses being taken through Running Start, is the student considered truant?**

**A.** No. Technically, meeting state graduation requirements with or without a diploma satisfies the compulsory attendance requirement. [RCW 28A.225.010](#) (Law regarding mandatory attendance.) See also Q38.

**Q4. Can a student withdraw from a class taken through Running Start without the permission of the high school or school district?**

**A.** Yes. However, the student is responsible for following the college's Add/Drop policies, and should let the high school know to ensure s/he remains on track for graduation. School districts and/or high schools should closely coordinate with colleges to ensure that the student does not become truant due to the withdrawal from a Running Start Class. Colleges may only claim students who participated in instructional activity sometime during the prior month. The high school or district's notification of a student's withdrawal from the Running Start class ensures that the college does not incorrectly over-claim these students.

**Q5. Can a student taking an online course through Running Start access the course via the high school campus?**

**A.** Possibly. A local high school, charter school or tribal compact school could choose to offer students the opportunity to access their online Running Start class(es) on the high school campus but must be sure not to exceed the 1.2 FTE limitation when claiming the student for the time s/he is present on campus. Allowing Running Start students to access computers on a high school campus without having them enrolled and supervised presents a liability risk.

**Q6. Can a student enroll in a Running Start class that has a once-per-week lab that conflicts with his/her high school course and just miss the high school class to attend the lab each week?**

**A.** No. A local high school, charter school or tribal compact school must ensure each Running Start student's schedule is free of conflicts, both between anomalies in the high school schedule and for classes not offered daily at the college. Any student missing a high school class to attend a Running Start course is considered absent. Missing once per week for a college quarter or semester would potentially impact his/her learning in the missed high school class and put the student at risk of being chronically absent.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Credit and Financial Aid Eligibility**

**Q7. May a high school or district elect to reduce the rate of credit granted a Running Start student for five-quarter (credit) hours of college work to less than one high school credit?**

**A.** No. [RCW 28A.230.090](#) (Law regarding high school graduation requirements/equivalencies) has established that five quarter or three semester college (credit) hours shall equal 1.0 high school credit. School districts and high schools are required to grant a full 1.0 high school credit for every five quarter or three semester credit hours of work successfully completed by a Running Start student.

**Q8. Can a high school or school district impose a sequence requirement on Running Start students?**

**A.** Yes. A rational course sequence requirement could be imposed as long as it applies to all high school students.

**Q9. May high schools or school districts split the corresponding high school credits between required and elective courses?**

**A.** Yes, but based on a case-by-case evaluation of the extent to which a college course is the equivalent of required high school coursework. An arbitrary uniform rate is squarely at odds with the course-by-course comparison and judgment required by [WAC 392-169-050](#). (Rule regarding enrollment for high school credit.)

It is permissible for the common school district superintendent or similar administrator in a private school, or tribal compact school, on an individual course basis, to split the credit for a course that is not comparable, following consultation with a college representative. The total credit awarded must still equate to the five-quarter or three-semester college credits equals 1.0 high school credit.

**Q10. Can a district refuse to establish Occupational Education or Arts dual credit equivalencies?**

**A.** Yes. School district administrators and boards of directors have the authority to adopt course equivalencies for Running Start courses offered to students. However, while decisions about Occupational Education and Arts equivalencies are made locally, the Legislature has made it clear that its intent "is to encourage maximum student access" to the Running Start program. School district administrators, boards and/or other staff leaders in charter and tribal compact schools are encouraged to establish any and all appropriate equivalencies, reflecting legislative intent for this program.

**Q11. May a high school restrict Running Start students from taking two like subjects in the same academic year? (Example: English 101 and 102).**

**A.** No.

**Q12. Are Running Start students allowed to take online college classes for dual credit?**

**A.** Yes. However, in order to claim Running Start funds, the college must be considered an eligible institute of higher education as described in [WAC 392-169-033](#) (Rules regarding colleges and universities that can offer Running Start.)

**Q13. May a Running Start student "challenge" a course and be claimed for state funding?**

**A.** Generally, no. State funding for Running Start is based on monthly enrollment counts. Students can only be claimed on enrollment counts if they participate in instructional

activities during the month prior to the count, and are subject to the 1.2 FTE monthly enrollment limit. Accelerated completion of a course is likely to exceed a student's monthly enrollment limits and could result in a tuition charge by the college for the student. Students are also responsible for paying fees associated with the "challenge" course.

**Q14. Which college courses may a Running Start student take?**

**A.** The entire college catalog is available to Running Start students, assuming that they have met any pre-requisites that the college requires of all students.

**Q15. Do Washington Running Start credits transfer to out-of-state colleges or universities?**

**A.** Transferability issues for courses taken while in Running Start are the same as for all other college course work. Parents and students are encouraged to educate themselves about the transferability of credits to another college, especially for all private and out-of-state universities. The receiving institution has the right to determine which college credits it will accept.

**Q16. Do credits earned through dual enrollment programs like Running Start affect a student's NCAA eligibility?**

**A.** No. [NCAA Bylaw 12.8.2.3](#) Joint College/High School Program states: "A student-athlete's eligibility under the five-year rule does not begin while a student is enrolled in a collegiate institution in a joint high school/college academic program for high school students in which the courses count as both high school graduation credit and college credit, provided the student has not officially graduated from high school and does not participate in intercollegiate athletics while enrolled in the joint program." (Revised: 11/01/2001 effective 8/01/2002, 7/31/2014)

College courses may be used to satisfy NCAA core-curriculum requirements if the courses are accepted and awarded credit by the high school for any student and meet all other requirements for core courses. College courses must be placed on the student's high school transcript.

**Q17. How do credits earned through dual enrollment programs impact a student's financial aid eligibility?**

**A. Financial aid eligibility of students while in Running Start.** Running Start students are not eligible for federal or direct state financial aid. Institutions of higher education may use their institutional financial aid fund for these students if they choose. Students are encouraged to inquire with the college and with their home high school or district to determine if there is assistance available for books, transportation, or any remaining tuition charges if enrolled in credits above and beyond those authorized for Running Start (unsubsidized college tuition expenses). See the fees and tuition section for more information.

**Financial aid eligibility of former Running Start students.** Basic eligibility for federal and state need-based aid is dependent on the student and family's income and family size, not participation in Running Start. Credits earned as a Running Start student will, however, affect the length of time a student can continue to receive state and federal financial aid, the satisfactory academic progress evaluation, and the annual maximum award amounts for federal student loan programs.

*Tip: Students with questions about the effect of Running Start on their student aid or scholarship packages should always check directly with the college's admissions, financial aid, and scholarship offices.*

**Maximum Timeframe.** Many types of financial aid have a maximum timeframe for eligibility that limits the length of time to receive aid. The limitation depends on the state, federal, and institutional policy, but is generally either 125 or 150 percent of the program length.

For Example:

If the Student Has 90 Quarter/60 Semester Running Start Credits Accepted by the College ...

<b>And the four-year institution's maximum timeframe policy is:</b>	<b>And the minimum credits required to complete a bachelor's degree is:</b>	<b>The maximum credits that can be earned before potentially jeopardizing student aid eligibility is:</b>
150%	180 quarter/120 semester	270 quarter/180 semester
125%	180 quarter/120 semester	225 quarter/150 semester

**Appeals of the Timeframe.** Depending on the college, individual students may be allowed to appeal the overall time limit. Appeals, if accepted, are based on each student's individual circumstances. Appeals often revolve around changes to the student's major, reconsideration of earlier remedial coursework, or unavoidable circumstances that extend the student's course of study.

**Effect of Year-in-College on Maximum Annual Federal Student Loan Amounts.** The federal student loan programs permit higher awards for second- and third-year college students than for first-year students. Running Start students who achieve third-year college status at the end of their Running Start program will qualify for the higher loan amounts right out of high school.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress.** One of the requirements for financial aid eligibility is that students maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP). Poor academic performance in Running Start, including withdrawing from courses, can negatively impact student aid eligibility.

SAP is a measurement of academic performance in terms of GPA and completed credits. Specific standards may vary by institution. **All prior college coursework, including that taken through Running Start, will be evaluated for SAP.**

### **Scholarships**

**Private Donor and Institutional Scholarships.** Policies surrounding private scholarships rest with the donor. How institutional scholarships are awarded is controlled by each college or university.



It is up to each private donor or each higher education institution to determine how Running Start credits impact consideration for scholarships that are reserved for freshmen.

Many four-year colleges and universities allow Running Start students to apply for scholarships. Students should check with the scholarship office of the institution in which they are enrolling to understand the college or university policy.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Disability Services**

**Q18. What should a high school student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan do to seek accommodations from the college as part of their participation in Running Start?**

**A.** Unlike students in K-12 schools, Running Start students have a responsibility to request any necessary accommodations from their college directly. The student should contact the college's disability services office well in advance of any published deadlines to make the request. The college may require documentation in support of a request for accommodations.

For students with an IEP: If Running Start has not previously been contemplated in the formulation of your IEP, parents/students may wish to discuss with their school district whether the IEP should be modified to reflect Running Start enrollment.

*Note: Institutions of higher education are required to make all programs and services physically accessible to all students, and to accommodate the academic participation of students with disabilities in college classes and activities. This does not include modifications to admission nor academic requirements if the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the course or program.*

**Q19. Who is responsible for covering the costs associated with ADA or Section 504 accommodations for Running Start students?**

**A.** Institutions of higher education are responsible for providing reasonable accommodations to qualified students under the ADA and Section 504. As with any other enrolled qualified student, colleges must cover the costs of complying with ADA or Section 504 for Running Start students who are enrolled in classes located at the college.

**Q20. Who is responsible for covering the costs associated with special education services outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP)?**

**A.** School districts, charter schools, and tribal compact schools are responsible for providing the services outlined in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for an eligible student. Colleges and high schools should work together to ensure that a student's needs are being met, including, where appropriate, entering into an interagency agreement to assure that each

agency is complying with its respective duties to provide appropriate accommodations to the disabled student under state and federal law. [WAC 392-169-080](#). (Rules regarding compliance with special education program requirements.)

Schools providing special education services to a student can claim eligible students on the P223H for special education funding. The enrolled hours of special education services that are part of a high school program may be claimed as a partial FTE on the P223 for basic education funding, provided that the combined high school and Running Start FTE does not exceed 1.20 FTE.

**Q21. How long is a student with an IEP or Section 504 plan eligible for Running Start?**

**A.** Running Start may provide the equivalent of two academic years of full-time eligibility for dual credit. An IEP or Section 504 plan, however, may indicate a student's need to extend the length of time required to complete his or her secondary education program. The academic and calendar year may not coincide under the IEP or Section 504 plan. Eligibility for Running Start may continue, if appropriate to the IEP or Section 504 plan, while the student continues work toward completing the district's graduation requirements so long as the courses being taken continue to address specific credit requirements necessary for high school graduation and the student is otherwise eligible.

**Q22. Does an IEP automatically qualify a student for Running Start if identified in the student's transition plan?**

**A.** No. The student must be eligible for Running Start in order to be claimed as a Running Start student. The IEP doesn't override the eligibility requirements. Under the law, a transition plan is simply a course of instruction that is part of a student's IEP.

**Q23. Is a school district required to provide transportation to a student with disabilities who wants to take classes through Running Start?**

**A.** A school district would be responsible for necessary transportation of a Running Start student to and from college if the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) provides for Running Start enrollment in an institution of higher education.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS Eligibility/Limitations**

**Q24. What are the definitions of an FTE and AAFTE?**

**A. FTE (Full Time Equivalent)** is the measurement of a student's instructional enrollment. For high school and skill center classes, 1.0 FTE is equal to 27 hours and 45 minutes of instruction per week or 1,665 weekly minutes. For part-time enrollment, FTE is calculated by dividing the student's enrolled high school and/or skill center weekly minutes by 1,665. For Running Start college course, FTE is based on the number of enrolled college credits. 1.0 FTE is equal to 15

quarter or semester college credits. The formula to calculate a student's Running Start FTE is (# of enrolled credits ÷ 15). [WAC 392-169-025](#) (Rule defining full-time enrollment.)

**AAFTE (Annual Average Full Time Equivalent)** is the annual average of the monthly FTE. For high school and skill center classes, AAFTE is the 10-month average of reported enrollment from September through June. For Running Start courses, AAFTE is the 9-month average of reported enrollment from October through June.

**Q25. Must the high schools/districts and colleges use the statewide Running Start Enrollment Verification Form (RSEVF)?**

**A.** Yes. A RSEVF must be completed prior to the beginning of the Running Start class for each Running Start student including those who attend private schools and are home-based, for each term, and for each college. Completion would include the student, parent, high school, and college signatures. Copies of each student's completed form should be retained at the high school and college, as well as, a copy given to the student.

**Q26. How frequently will the RSEVF be updated by OSPI?**

**A.** The RSEVF is updated by OSPI at least annually and is available on the OSPI website.

**Q27. May a student change their high school or college course schedule after the RSEVF has been signed?**

**A.** Yes. If a student changes his high school or college schedule after the RSEVF has been signed, a new RSEVF must be completed and submitted immediately, reflecting the revised Running Start FTE eligibility. This informs all parties of the effect the schedule change on the claimable FTE and gives the college the opportunity to contact the parents/student for tuition.

**Q28. Would an electronic signature from a Running Start advisor be acceptable for the RSEVF?**

**A.** There is no legal requirement that prohibits colleges from using digital signatures on enrollment verification forms. However, colleges are responsible for ensuring the validity and authenticity of any electronic signatures used [RCW 19.34.310](#). (Law regarding assuming risk for non-authentic digital signatures)

**Q29. May a student elect to take more than a combined 1.20 FTE of high school and college classes in a college quarter/semester?**

**A.** Yes. A student may elect to take additional college classes above the 1.20 FTE but must pay for the additional college credits. See also Q64 and Q67.

**Q30. May a Running Start student be enrolled full-time at a participating college and also enroll in a class at the high school?**

**A.** Yes. A Running Start student may be claimed up to a combined 1.20 FTE between the high school and the participating college with a maximum of 1.00 FTE at each entity. A student attending Running Start full-time and taking up to 15 credits can also attend the high school and be claimed for up to a 0.20 FTE at no cost to the student. A student enrolling for more than the combined 1.20 FTE may be required to pay tuition to the college for the additional college credits or may qualify to receive a low-income tuition waiver from the college.

**Q31. If a student takes a “college orientation” class or any course in August, will it be funded through Running Start?**

**A.** No. Running Start enrollment is limited to the standard K–12 school year funding months (September through June). Enrollment in August is outside this funding period and cannot be claimed for state funding.

**Q32. Can the college claim and bill for a compressed class completed prior to the October “count” date?**

**A.** Running Start FTE is based on the student’s enrolled credits on the monthly “count” day. Compressed classes that occur in September and end before the October monthly count day cannot be claimed for October, since the student is not enrolled in this class on the October count day.

**Q33. Can school districts or high schools limit a student’s enrollment in Running Start?**

**A.** No. A school district cannot limit a student’s enrollment in Running Start by requiring the student to be enrolled full-time in high school classes and restricting the student’s enrollment at the college to 0.20 FTE. Students who qualify for Running Start can enroll up to 15 college credits, provided that they satisfy the college’s prerequisite requirements and do not surpass the combined 1.20 FTE and AAFTE maximums.

**Q34. May a school district or high school condition a student’s eligibility for enrollment as a student in the Running Start Program upon a determination by school district or building personnel that the student is academically qualified to take college or university course work?**

**A.** No. The determination of whether or not a student is competent to profit from college or university course work is within the jurisdiction and authority of the college or university. The college or university is to establish eligibility requirements for Running Start students that are the same as the requirements applied to other students enrolling in the college. [WAC 392-169-045](#) (Enrollment general requirements/conditions)

**Q35. May a school district or high school condition a student's eligibility for enrollment in the Running Start Program upon the maintenance of a particular grade point average?**

**A.** No. The eligibility requirements for participation in the Running Start Program are set forth in statute and rule to the exclusion of any GPA requirement. Nothing in statute or rule implies any authority for school districts or high schools to impose additional requirements or conditions upon a student who meets the minimum requirements established by the college and imposed by current Running Start law.

**Q36. How is junior/senior standing determined?**

**A.** It is the responsibility of the school district, charter school or tribal compact school to establish junior/senior standing. Any criteria used to establish grade placement must be applied uniformly in accordance with district policy to students irrespective of their status as Running Start students. [WAC 180-51-035](#) (Rules regarding establishment of a graduation year) See also Q79, Q82, and Q84

**Q37. May a student start the Running Start Program mid-year?**

**A.** Yes. Students may begin to take Running Start classes at the start of any term during their junior or senior academic year (excluding summer college quarter).

Note: In order to receive the full benefit of the Running Start program allowable under the law, students should start at the beginning of the first term of their junior year in high school. [WAC 392-169-055](#) (Rule regarding extent and duration of Running Start enrollment). See also Q48

**Q38. May a second-year senior enroll in the Running Start Program?**

**A.** A second-year senior may enroll in the Running Start Program **if they have been enrolled previously as a junior or a senior**, but may **only take** those specific courses needed to meet the school district, charter school or tribal compact school graduation requirements. A second-year senior is generally understood as being a student who has failed to meet high school graduation requirements by the end of the student's 12th grade academic year. [WAC 392-169-055](#) (Rule on extent and duration of Running Start enrollment)

**Q39. Can a student who has met the district, charter school or tribal compact school's high school graduation requirements still attend Running Start if they do not take the step of graduating?**

**A.** It would depend. A student who, at the **beginning** of his/her senior academic year has not met the district's high school graduation requirements for total **credits** is eligible to attend Running Start until the end of the school year. Students who have completed all the credits needed for high school graduation before the beginning of a school year but still need to complete a High School and Beyond Plan are **not** eligible to participate in Running Start. [WAC 392-169-020](#) (Rule defining an eligible student) Also see Q48, Q71, Q73, and Q74

**Q40. Can a student in second-year senior status stay in Running Start just to complete an associate degree?**

**A.** No. The pursuit of an associate degree is not the intent of the Running Start program. Running Start is intended to advance students toward completing a district's high school graduation requirements. [RCW 28A.600.360](#), (Law regarding application toward graduation requirements) and [WAC 392-169-015](#). (Rule defining Running Start program definition).

**Q41 A student chooses not to utilize third quarter (spring) of Grade 11 eligibility. Can that third quarter be carried over so that the student can utilize the maximum of six quarters of enrollment?**

**A.** No. Junior year eligibility would be complete. However, the student would still be eligible for the three quarters of 12th grade. An additional year of Running Start as a second year senior is restricted to only the courses that will meet the district, charter school, or tribal compact schools graduation requirements. [WAC 392-169-055\(4\)](#) (Rules regarding extent and duration of Running Start enrollment, section 4) Running Start eligibility is not based on six quarters. It is based on two academic years for junior and senior standing only.

**Q42. May a high school deny Running Start participation to students under the age of 21?**

**A.** No. A student who is under the age 21 as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of the new school year is eligible to participate in Running Start for that school year, provided they have not met their district's credit requirements for graduation nor exceeded the maximum enrollment in the Running Start program. An eligible student who turns 21 during the school year, may continue to participate for the remainder of that school year. However, s/he may only enroll in classes specifically needed for high school graduation and cannot exceed the maximum allowable Running Start enrollment. [WAC 392-169-020](#) (Rule defining an eligible student) [RCW 28A.600.330](#) (Law regarding maximum enrollment) After a student turns 21, s/he cannot access college courses through Running Start during the next school year.

**Q43. Can a Running Start student retake a course to improve their grade?**

**A.** Yes, if both local high school or school district and local college allow repeating the course. Both the original course and the retaken course, as well as the corresponding grades earned, will still show on both the college and high school transcripts. Whether or not the original grade is removed from the grade point average calculation for the high school is determined by the local school district policy regarding grade replacement. Grade replacement on the college transcript is determined by the college's policy.

**Q44. Are Running Start students subject to the compulsory attendance laws?**

**A.** Yes, Running Start students are subject to the compulsory attendance laws, as set out in RCW [28A.225.010](#). (Laws regarding mandatory attendance)

**Q45. May a student expelled from high school for a serious offense continue to be enrolled in Running Start?**

**A.** Yes. Students who have been suspended or expelled from their high school for a violation of school district policies may continue to participate in college classes through the end of the academic term. Colleges may not discipline Running Start students who have been suspended or expelled from high school unless the college determines that the student has violated the college's own student conduct code. Districts and colleges should address the applicability of their respective discipline policies in contractual agreements or memoranda of understanding.

**Q46. May a student who has been previously expelled from high school enroll in a college course through Running Start?**

**A.** Yes, contingent upon being re-enrolled in a high school and meeting all other eligibility requirements.

**Q47. If a currently-enrolled Running Start student moves out of the high school district, can the student continue Running Start through the original district?**

**A.** Yes. A student who moves to a new school district in Washington state after enrolling in Running Start, and takes no classes at any high school in the new district, shall be deemed to have retained his or her residence in the school district in which they originally enrolled in Running Start. This retention is for high school graduation, funding, and other purposes under the Running Start Program. [WAC 392-169-020\(2\)](#). (Rule for the definition of an eligible student, section 2).

**Q48. Is a student who completes Grade 12 in one district, then transfers the following year to another district where the student is placed as a 12th grader (not as a second-year senior) eligible to be coded as a first-year senior in Running Start?**

**A.** No. The student is limited to second-year senior standards. [RCW 28A.600.330](#) (Law regarding maximum terms of enrollment for high school credit.) See also Q37 and Q39

**Q49. Do Running Start students need to meet all district and state graduation requirements in order to earn a high school diploma from a district, charter school or tribal compact school?**

**A.** Yes.

**Q50. May Running Start students earning a high school diploma be excused from the required statewide proficiency tests because the testing conflicts with college classes?**

**A.** No. Running Start students who have not yet met standard on their 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA and/or Math assessments should check with their home high school to see what options are available for retaking one or both exams or using an alternative assessment option. For the 11<sup>th</sup> grade

Science exam, arrangements should be made at the college or high school to accommodate the student who is taking the high school test required by the state.

**Q51. If a nonresident student (out-of-district student wanting to enroll in a non-resident district) is accepted into a district's high school and enrolls in Running Start, but later withdraws from the college, can the high school prohibit the student from enrolling in classes in the high school to which the student had been accepted?**

**A.** No. It is the duty of the high school to provide an education for students residing in the district and students who have been released from their resident district to attend the nonresident high school through a Choice Transfer as otherwise provided by law.

**Q52. What is the responsibility of the school district to inform potential Running Start students about the Running Start program?**

**A.** A school district shall provide general information about Running Start and how to become eligible to all students in grades ten, eleven, and twelve, and to the parents/guardians of those students. The district must share information about the opportunity to enroll in the program through online courses available at state institutions of higher education and including the college high school diploma options under [RCW 28B.50.535](#). (Laws regarding receiving a high school diploma through a community or technical college).

To assist the high school in planning, a student shall inform the high school of his/her intent to enroll in courses at an institution of higher education for credit. Students are responsible for applying for admission to the institution of higher education. [RCW 28A.600.320](#) (Laws regarding information on Running Start).

**Q53. Who determines which college the student will attend?**

**A.** The students and their parents. Although students will generally attend the college closest to their high school or district, they may attend any eligible state institution of higher education. Running Start is offered through Washington's 34 community and technical colleges, the following public, four-year universities: Washington State University, Central Washington University and Eastern Washington University, and two tribal colleges—Northwest Indian College and Spokane Tribal College. [WAC 392-169-033](#) (Rule regarding the definition of eligible institutions of higher education)

**Q54. Can a high school or district deny a student's application to enroll in Running Start if the student does not want a diploma from the district or the high school?**

**A.** No. If the student meets all eligibility requirements, the high school or district cannot keep a student from participating.



**Q55. Can a college limit the proportion of Running Start students in any individual class?**

**A.** No. A college cannot deny access to Running Start students for participation in any single course or program. Under the law, any policy adopted to limit Running Start enrollment must be generally applicable and related to physical facility limitations, operating funds limitations, academically appropriate class size, or a student's ability to benefit from a particular class, course or program.

**Q56. Can a high school impose a registration deadline or otherwise limit registration times for Running Start?**

**A.** No. If a student meets the eligibility requirements and can register for college classes within a college's registration deadline, s/he should be allowed to enroll. However, the college can impose a registration deadline. It is recommended that high schools and colleges work together to define a mutually understood process for registration. Schedules must include enough flexibility not to impose barriers on students' Running Start participation. Each term, a complete Running Start Verification Form (RSEVF) must be in place prior to the start of the Running Start class.

**Q57. Must students disclose their immigration status on Running Start application forms?**

**A.** No. Provided that the student meets the definition of an enrolled student pursuant to [WAC 392-121-106](#), (Rule defining an enrolled student), a student's immigration status does not impact their eligibility nor prohibit them from enrolling in classes that receive basic education funding, including Running Start. [WAC 392-137-115](#). (Rule defining student residence).

However, residency determinations must be made for students who exceed the 1.2 FTE, enroll in non- college level courses during the regular term, or enroll in any course(s) during the summer term between junior and senior years of high school. These situations would not be covered under the Running Start reimbursement and would be subject to residency for tuition determination as defined in [RCW 28B.15.012](#). (Law defining resident or nonresident student.)

**Q58. Must students disclose their social security or Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) on Running Start application forms?**

**A.** No. However, colleges may ask all students, including Running Start students, to provide their social security numbers or ITIN for federal tax reporting purposes. Under federal law, colleges must have a legally permissible need to collect this information, must inform individuals that disclosure is voluntary, and must explain the legal basis for seeking the numbers and how the college intends to use them.

**Q59. Can a student at a charter or tribal compact school enroll in Running Start?**

**A.** Yes. Students enrolled in a charter or tribal compact school can enroll in Running Start without enrolling in a public high school. The charter or tribal compact school would provide the high school staff that would sign the Running Start Enrollment Verification Form (RSEVF) each term for their students.

The monthly enrollment report (P223RS) completed by the college should be sent to the charter or tribal compact school and the state funding generated by their student(s) would be paid directly to the charter or tribal compact school. Based on the appropriate monthly enrollment reports, the charter or tribal compact school would then remit up to 93% of the funds for the Running Start students to the college.

**Q60. Can a student residing outside of Washington take online courses with Washington colleges through Running Start?**

**A.** No. In order to meet the definition of an enrolled student, the student must be a resident of a Washington state district pursuant to [WAC 392-121-106](#). (Rule defining an enrolled student.) Running Start funding is only available to Washington state residents enrolled in a Washington state public high school, charter school or tribal compact school and living a majority (+50%) of their time in Washington. Establishing residency is also based on the expectation that the student will have resided in Washington state on the monthly count day for a minimum of 20 consecutive days. [WAC 392-137-115](#) (Rule defining student residence)

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Fees & Tuition**

**Q61. May a high school or college seek reimbursement from a Running Start student for failure of a course?**

**A.** No.

**Q62. May colleges charge fees to Running Start students?**

**A.** Yes. Running Start students shall pay mandatory fees, including course and placement testing fees, as established by each college, and potentially technology and other fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020 ([Law defining tuition fees](#)) and [RCW 28B.15.041](#) (Law defining services and activity fees). Washington state colleges and universities must make available fee waivers for low-income Running Start students. [RCW 28A.600.310\(2\)](#) (Laws regarding fee waivers, section 2)

A Running Start student shall be considered low income, and eligible for a fee waiver upon proof that the student is currently qualified to receive free or reduced-price lunch. Acceptable documentation of low-income status may also include:

- A. Student has been deemed eligible for free-reduced-price lunches in the past five years

- B. Family income is equal to or less than 50 percent of the state median
- C. Family income is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level
- D. Receiving any state or federal assistance funds
- E. Foster youth

*Note: Consumable supplies, textbooks, and other materials retained by the student "are not within the definition of fees and therefore not subject to the mandatory low-income waiver provisions."*

**Q63. What are the maximum credits a student can enroll in and receive state funding, and when do colleges charge tuition?**

**A.** Running Start students may enroll tuition-free for a maximum of 15 college credits, but are limited to a combined 1.20 FTE when enrolled in both high school and Running Start courses. When a Running Start student seeks more credits, colleges should charge appropriate per-credit rates for any credits beyond the 15 credit maximum or beyond 1.20 FTE, up to the maximum credits allowed for all enrolled students by institutional policy.

**Q64. Can school districts assess a fine or fee against students for failing Running Start courses, withdrawing from Running Start courses, or never showing up for Running Start courses?**

**A.** No. See Q29.

**Q65. Can GET (Guaranteed Education Tuition) credits be used to pay for unsubsidized college tuition?**

**A.** If enrolled in credits above and beyond those authorized for Running Start funding, Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) funds may be used to cover qualified expenses such as tuition charges, fees, and books/supplies. However, it may be more advantageous to use GET units for qualified expenses following Running Start enrollment. [RCW 28A.600.310\(2\)\(c\)](#) (Law regarding using GET credits, section 2c)

**Q66. Are low-income tuition waivers available for Running Start students who want to take additional credits above the combined 1.20 FTE limit?**

**A.** There is no requirement for institutions of higher education to make available tuition or fee waivers for credits taken beyond the maximum allowable through Running Start. [WAC 392-169-060](#) (Exception from tuition and fees). Students are always encouraged to check with their high school, and the institution of higher education in which they are taking courses through Running Start, to see what additional financial assistance may be available.

**Q67. Are Running Start students able to receive a tuition waiver for one additional college credit if they are taking 9 RS Tuition-Free College Credits (0.60 FTE)?**

**A.** Yes. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges approved an additional tuition waiver for one college credit. This waiver applies to Running Start students with eligibility per

the Running Start Enrollment Verification Form (RSEVF) for **exactly** 9 Running Start tuition-free college credits (0.60 FTE) who enroll in **exactly** 10 college credits. The 10th credit of tuition will be waived in cashing using Financial Aid Program Code (FAPC) of W8A. The waiver is only for tuition. If the Running Start student registers for anything other than 10 credits **exactly**, they will not be eligible for this waiver. See Q29

**Q68. Are school districts allocated any additional state funds to assist students with the costs of transportation, books and fees?**

**A.** Yes. Subject to funds appropriated specifically for this purpose, OSPI annually allocates Academic Acceleration Incentive Program funds to districts based on an established formula that incorporates their previous year's total enrollment in dual credit programs, as reported in CEDARS. The intent of the Legislature is that these funds be used to support teacher training, curriculum, technology, examination fees, textbook fees, transportation fees for Running Start students and any other costs associated with offering dual credit courses. [RCW 28A.320.196\(4\)](#) (Law regarding Academic Acceleration Incentive Program funds, section 4)

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Foreign Exchange/International Students/Study Abroad**

**Q69. Are foreign exchange students eligible to participate in Running Start?**

**A.** It depends on the type of visa a student has. Foreign exchange students with an F-1 visa are required to pay tuition to the high school they plan to attend in the United States. Evidence of this payment must be provided prior to the issuance of the visa. A student with an F-1 visa who chooses to enroll in Running Start cannot be claimed for state funding by the school district or the college.

Foreign exchange students with a J-1 visa or student with visas in other categories who are enrolled as an eleventh or twelfth grader are eligible to participate in Running Start. J-1 visa students must comply with all eligibility requirements, be mindful of any restrictions on enrollment established by the student's exchange program sponsor and comply with all federal requirements.

**Q70. Can Running Start students participate in Study Abroad programs offered by their college?**

**A.** Yes. Running Start students have access to all the classes offered in the college catalog and may participate in Study Abroad. Each college has specific policies and procedures governing Study Abroad experiences. Students must follow the institutional policies regarding student participation in Study Abroad programs as well as the policy and procedures within the institution's Study Abroad Office. These policies may or may not impact the Running Start student's ability to participate in these programs.

When the student is abroad, the college can claim him/her for the standard Running Start reimbursement rate. Students are responsible for any additional costs.

*Note: While the allowance for study abroad programs permits a student who is resident of a Washington state school district to attend that college's student abroad program, it does not permit a student who is not ordinarily a resident of Washington state to participate in a college's online program while living outside of Washington state.*

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Graduation Requirements**

**Q71. Can the high school or district require progress toward the district's diploma and require that students not only earn credits, but complete other requirements for graduation, including meeting state assessment requirements and completing the High School and Beyond Plan?**

**A.** It depends. Students who are seeking a high school diploma from a public school district, charter school or tribal compact school must meet all requirements of the state and the district/school.

*Note: The intent of Running Start law is to encourage maximum student access to the Running Start program. Districts/Schools should not adopt policies and procedures that intentionally create barriers to student participation in the program. For example, requiring daily or weekly attendance in a High School and Beyond Plan class would logically hinder Running Start participation. Districts that have such requirements are strongly encouraged to offer accommodations to students participating in Running Start.*

Students who are not specifically seeking a high school diploma from a public school district, charter school or tribal compact school may choose to refrain from completing the district's/school's specific graduation requirements and focus on earning the credits needed to receive a diploma through the college. Also see Q1, Q39 and Q74

**Q72. Does a student seeking a Washington state high school diploma through an associate degree at the college need to complete local high school and/or district requirements?**

**A.** No. Running Start students who earn an associate degree may request a Washington state high school diploma from the college. If a student fails to earn an associate's degree, he or she would need to meet the requirements of the district to be awarded a high school diploma through the district. [RCW 28B.50.535](#) (Law regarding receiving a high school diploma through a community or technical college)

**Q73. Can a student who has met the district, charter school or tribal compact school's high school graduation requirements still attend Running Start if they do not take the step of graduating?**

**A.** It would depend. A student who, at the **beginning** of his/her senior academic year has not met the district's high school graduation requirements for total **credits** is eligible to attend Running Start until the end of the school year. Students who have completed all the credits needed for high school graduation before the beginning of a school year but still need to complete a High School and Beyond Plan are **not** eligible to participate in Running Start. [WAC 392-169-020](#) (Rule defining an eligible **student**) Also see Q39

**Q74 Can a Running Start student who earns an associate degree from a college receive a high school diploma from that college?**

**A.** Yes. The community and technical colleges are authorized to issue high school diplomas for Running Start students who enroll in the college and complete an associate of arts degree, associate of science degree, associate of technology degree or an associate in applied science degree. Students must provide a written request to the college registrar's office (or designee) to receive a Washington state high school diploma from the college. [RCW 28B.50.535](#) (Law regarding receiving a high school diploma through a community or technical college.) See also Q1, Q39, and Q84

**Q75. When can Running Start students who have completed their associate degree request the college-based high school diploma?**

**A.** A Running Start student may request the college-based high school diploma when they apply for graduation with their associate degree or anytime thereafter.

**Q76. Should high schools or districts continue to track a student's graduation status if the student has indicated intent to pursue his or her high school diploma through a college?**

**A.** Yes. All Running Start students are considered public high school students and as such should be served and treated like all other high school students. Providing all enrolled students with guidance as to graduation requirements and status is consistent with the guidance role of the high school, regardless of student intent relative to possible alternative graduation options.

For purposes of graduation rates, students who are successful in earning their high school diploma under the provisions of [RCW 28B.50.535](#) (Law regarding receiving a high school diploma through a community or technical college.) will count as graduates of the home high school. Students who are unsuccessful in completing graduation requirements, either through the school district or under the provisions of RCW 28B.50.535, will be considered non-graduates.

**Q77. If a student earns a high school diploma through the college, how would the high school document the student as a graduate of the school district for the purposes of graduation rates?**

**A.** When the high school is informed by the college that the student has earned a high school diploma issued by the college under the provisions of [RCW 28B.50.535](#) (Law regarding receiving a high school diploma through a community or technical college.), the high school may withdraw the student using the state withdrawal code "GA" (Graduated through Associate degree).

**Q78. If Running Start students earn associate degrees after their expected graduation dates, can they be documented in their student records as an extended graduation student so they can count in the high school's extended graduation rate?**

**A.** Yes. If students retain Running Start eligibility as a second-year senior student (enrolling only in classes that will meet the district's graduation requirements) and complete remaining requirements for an associate degree, the high school, if informed by the college, could code such students "GA" and include that student in the school's extended graduation rate for that school year.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Home School/Private School/Choice Transfer Students**

**Q79. May home school and private school students enroll in the Running Start Program?**

**A.** Yes. Any student seeking college credit through Running Start must enroll through the local public school district or high school, have a completed Running Start Verification Form (RSEVF) in place for each term and each college, and been granted junior or senior standing by the public school district's grade placement policy. [WAC 180-51-035](#) (Rules regarding establishment of a graduation year) See also Q36.

A private or home school student is not required to attend classes in the public high school in order to participate in Running Start. Students receiving home-based instruction under Chapter 28A.200 RCW (Laws regarding home-based instruction) and students attending private schools approved under Chapter 28A.195 RCW (Laws regarding private schools) are not required to meet the student learning goals, obtain a certificate of academic achievement or a certificate of individual achievement to graduate from high school, or to master the essential academic learning requirements. [RCW 28A.600.310](#)(1)(c) (Laws regarding Running Start eligibility, section 1C.)

For state and federal accountability reporting purposes: A student receiving home-based instruction enrolling in a public high school for the sole purpose of participating in courses at the college shall not be counted by the school district if the student's parents or guardians filed a declaration of intent to provide home-based instruction and the student received

home-based instruction during the school year before the school year in which the student intends to participate in Running Start.

Note: Enrolling any student in the Running Start program means that the student is also enrolled as a public high school student in order to access state funding allotted for the Running Start program.

**Q80. Do homeschool families need to have a Declaration of Intent on file for the year preceding Running Start participation?**

A. No. See OSPI Bulletin No. 098-07. (Posted separately.)

**Q81. Do homeschool students enrolled in Running Start need to complete local district graduation requirements if seeking a diploma through the associate degree?**

A. No. See [RCW 28B.50.535\(2\)](#) (Law regarding receiving a high school diploma through a community or technical college, section 2.) Also see [Q74](#)

**Q82. How is junior/senior standing determined for private school and home school students who wish to participate in Running Start?**

A. It is the responsibility of the school district, charter school or tribal compact school to establish junior/senior standing. Any criteria used to establish grade placement must be applied uniformly in accordance with district policy to students irrespective of their status as Running Start students. [WAC 180-51-035](#) (Rules regarding establishment of a graduation year)

Once a grade placement is made and the student's eligibility is determined, a change to another school district, should the student move or a choice transfer is in place, does not alter the initial grade placement, consistent with [WAC 392-169-020\(2\)](#). (Rule defining student eligibility, section 2). Some schools consider age appropriateness; others review credits and prior learning. In other cases, a standardized achievement test may be used in the absence of adequate documentation of a student's home-based education.

*Note: Any district criteria used to establish grade placement must be applied uniformly to all students, regardless of intent to enroll in Running Start or intent to graduate from the high school. See Q36*

**Q83. Can parents appeal local school district grade placement eligibility decisions?**

A. This is a local decision. Parents may appeal only if the district has a policy/procedure for such an appeal.



**Q84. A home school Running Start student is in 11th grade, but wants to take a year off from Running Start next year. Would this student be able to return after one year off and do Running Start as a 12th grader?**

**A.** It is up to the resident district to establish and interpret grade placement to students who enroll. In this case, the student could potentially be seen as a second-year senior, which would limit Running Start enrollment to only those courses needed to meet specific high school graduation credit requirements. [WAC 392-169-020](#)(3) (Laws defining student eligibility, section 3) See also Q36 and Q74

**Q85. A home school student chooses not to utilize third quarter (spring) of Grade 11 eligibility. Can that third quarter be carried over so that the student can utilize the maximum six quarters of enrollment?**

**A.** No. Junior year eligibility would be complete. Running Start eligibility is based on the equivalent of full-time enrollment for two academic years for junior and senior standing only. However, the student would still be eligible for the three quarters of 12th grade and could also be eligible for the second-year senior year. [WAC 392-169-055](#)(4) (Rules regarding extent and duration of Running Start enrollment, section 4)

**Q86. Does a school district have to post Running Start course grades in the grade history file of a home school student who is only enrolled for the purpose of taking Running Start classes?**

**A.** Yes. All earned credit must be recorded on an official high school transcript.

**Q87. May a school district or high school award a diploma to a private school student who enrolls in the public district, but takes classes only through Running Start?**

**A.** Yes, but only if all state and local school district graduation requirements are met.

**Q88. How does the 1.20 FTE limitation apply to private school and home-based instruction students who are also enrolled in Running Start?**

**A.** All students are eligible for up to a maximum of 1.0 FTE or 15 credits at the college and a combined public high school and college FTE of 1.20. A Running Start Enrollment Verification Form (RSEVF) should be completed for all students wishing to enroll in Running Start. A private school or home-based instruction student who is also taking courses in a public high school, charter school or tribal compact school must adhere to the 1.20 FTE limitation.

For a private school or home-based student who is **not** enrolled in a public high school, charter school or tribal compact school **for any classes**, the RSEVF should show that there is no FTE claimed by the high school. The student would be eligible for 15 credits of Running Start in addition to the courses being taken through their home school or private school.

**Q89. Can a student who is attending a non-resident district pursuant a Choice Transfer participate in Running Start at a college near their home district?**

**A.** Yes. This can be accomplished in two ways. The choice district can complete a RSEVF with the college in the student's home district and the college would report the student's enrollment to the choice district. Or the choice district can enter into an inter-district agreement with the home district, releasing a portion of the student's FTE for the home district to use for the student's Running Start enrollment. Refer to OSPI's [Bulletin #035-18](#) for more information on Choice Transfers and inter-district agreements.

**Q90. Can a student who is attending a non-resident district pursuant a Choice Transfer be required to return to their home district and/or to take a course in the non-resident high school if they choose to enroll full-time in Running Start?**

**A.** Districts are required to have policies in place that establish rational, fair and equitable standards for acceptance and rejection of choice requests, as well as the conditions for which a Choice Transfer would be rescinded. Students and parents or guardians must be given written notification of the specific reason(s) for the rescindment as per the school district's policy and their right to appeal the rescindment to OSPI.

*Note: Districts should ensure that their Choice Transfer policies adhere to the Legislature's intent that districts provide maximum access to Running Start for interested and ready students.*

Students and parent(s) or guardian(s) must also be notified of their right to appeal district decisions that reject choice requests or terminate existing Choice Transfers. Appeals can be made both to the district and to OSPI. [RCW 28A.225.220 – 28A.225.225](#) (Laws related to Choice Transfer agreements) and [RCW 28A.225.230](#) (Laws related to Choice Transfer appeals.) See OSPI [Bulletin 035-18](#) for additional information on choice transfers and inter-district agreements.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Parental Rights & Responsibilities**

**Q91. Is the parent of a Running Start student entitled to review attendance and grade information held by the college or university?**

**A.** Under federal law, students who attend postsecondary educational institutions hold the confidentiality rights to their education records. They have the right to consent prior to any disclosure of information from education records held by the postsecondary institution.

However, an exception to the consent requirement allows the parents of dependent students to review their student's education records without the consent of the student. Proof of dependency is usually verified via a copy of the most recent year's federal tax form showing that the parent claims the student as a dependent. Neither the age of the student nor the parent's status as a custodial parent is relevant. If a student is claimed as a dependent by either parent for tax purposes, then either parent may have access under this provision. [See](#)

[34 CFR § 99.31](#)(a)(8). (Link to information posted by the Legal Information Institute regarding disclosure of student information, section 8.)

**Q92. May Running Start students participate in field trips that are scheduled as a part of the college course?**

**A.** Yes, but written parental permission should be obtained for all field trips for Running Start students under the age of 18. If parents do not give permission, faculty should consider providing alternative options to that student. Most Running Start Coordinators collect a blanket permission form early in the enrollment process.

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Student Activities & Recognitions**

**Q93. May Running Start students participate in college or university campus activities, such as student government, organizations, and clubs?**

**A.** Yes. With the exception of intercollegiate sports, Running Start students may participate in any activities on the college/university campus, consistent with the institution's general requirements for participation in extracurricular activities.

**Q94. May Running Start students participate in high school activities including sports?**

**A.** Yes. Running Start students may participate in any high school activities, including sports, consistent with the high school and school district's own eligibility requirements and [Washington Intercollegiate Activities Association \(WIAA\) handbook](#).

*Note: WIAA guidelines allow participation by Running Start students. Students should work with their high school counselor to ensure they are taking the equivalent of a full course load in order to maintain eligibility with the WIAA.*

**Q95. Can a high school prohibit a student from participating in the high school graduation ceremony, taking classes at the high school, or participating in extracurricular activities if the student is choosing to receive a high school diploma from the college?**

**A.** Running Start students and parents should be informed as to existing district policies relative to a student's eligibility to enroll in classes at the high school and participate in extracurricular activities if s/he is not pursuing a high school diploma. Participation in the high school, charter school or tribal compact school's graduation ceremony is to be determined by local district policy and is not linked to state statute related to diploma requirements and should be covered in parent and student guidance.

**Q96. Can a school district or high school preclude a student from being eligible to be senior class valedictorian or senior class salutatorian if the student enrolls in one or more classes via Running Start?**

**A.** Such preclusion could violate equal protection principles. A 12th grade Running Start student and a 12th grade regular high school student are each entitled to participate equally in a high school graduation ceremony. A school should have criteria, other than mere status as a Running Start student, for these honors.

For example, if the sole criterion for a specific honor was a high grade point average (GPA), a Running Start student with a high GPA would be just as eligible as a non-Running Start student with a high GPA. On the other hand, if the criteria includes a high GPA coupled with a certain level of participation in class or school activities (e.g., serving as class officer or other leadership activity), it is possible that a Running Start student would have a more difficult time qualifying for such honors and recognitions.

*Note: The intent of Running Start law is to encourage maximum student access to the Running Start program. Districts/Schools should not adopt policies and procedures that intentionally create barriers to student participation in the program, nor other disincentives for student participation.*

## **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

### **Transcript Information**

**Q97. When a student in Running Start drops a class at the college, and receives a "W" on their college transcript, should the high school post the grade as an "F" on the high school transcript?**

**A.** No. It must be posted as a "W" on the high school transcript.

**Q98. If a Running Start student fails to pay his fees to a college, but otherwise completes the coursework satisfactorily, can the college withhold his grades? Can the student be prevented from graduating from high school?**

**A.** The answer to the first question lies in the applicable policy of the particular institution. It is possible for a student to receive high school credit, but not college credit, in this situation.

The answer to the second question is no. The failure to pay college fees related to the earning of college credit via Running Start is separate from the issue of whether the student satisfactorily met the course requirements to pass and apply the earned credits toward high school graduation. The college is limited to withholding the student's grades only pertaining to issuing the student's college transcript. In the situation described above, the high school counselor and the Running Start coordinator at the college must communicate with one another in order for the high school to be apprised of the student's grade.

**Q99. Are all Running Start courses shown on the high school transcript?**

**A.** Yes. Running Start courses need to be recorded on the high school transcript. The standardized transcript must contain a designation of "R" for courses completed and credit earned through Running Start. [WAC 392-415-070](#) (Rules regarding mandatory high school transcript content)

**Q100. Are colleges required to send individual transcripts to high schools or districts in order to provide evidence of successful completion of courses taken through the program?**

**A.** No. Nothing in law or administrative code mandates that a high school or district must receive an official transcript from the college. The college must supply "evidence" of successful completion of courses. Evidence may include college-generated spreadsheets. [WAC 392-169-085](#) (Rules regarding high school credit awarded by districts)

**Q101. How does the high school transcribe a grade from a college class through Running Start if the college uses a different grading scale than the high school (e.g., the college bases a B- on a 2.6 and the high school uses 2.7)? Will the student have different grades on the high school and college transcripts?**

**A.** It is possible that the respective transcripts will show different grades. However, the high school transcript needs to record the grade in compliance with WAC 392-415-050. The high school would transcribe the grade appropriate to the rules for K-12 and the college would transcribe the grade appropriate to its policy. [WAC 392-415-050](#) (Rules regarding graduation reporting and calculation system.)