

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 2011

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)
Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB)
State Board of Education (SBE)

SUBJECT: Running Start Program – Questions and Answers

The Running Start Program was initiated by the Legislature as a component of the 1990 parent and student “Choice Act” (Chapter 9, Laws of 1990, 1st Ex. Sess.). As amended, the provisions of the “Choice Act” that pertain to Running Start are codified at RCW 28A.600.300 to RCW 28A.600.400. It is intended to provide students a program option consisting of attendance at certain institutions of higher education and the simultaneous earning of high school and college/university credit.

Eleventh and twelfth grade students have a right granted by the Legislature to participate in Running Start at public expense. The exercise of that right is subject only to minimal eligibility and procedural requirements, which are spelled out, in state administrative rules.

This document is the 2011 updated version of the “brochure” first printed in April 1997. The answers have been developed in collaboration with a variety of K-12 and higher education representatives and the Office of the Attorney General. The answers reflect how schools, school districts, and higher education institutions need to implement or administer various elements of Running Start in order to be in compliance with state statutes. There are a total of 88 questions distributed among the following categories:

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The applicable statutes are [RCW 28A.600.300 through 28A.600.400](#), [RCW 28A.150.260](#), [RCW 28A.150.290](#), and [RCW 28B.50.535](#).

The applicable implementing rules are found in Chapter [392-169 WAC](#) (OSPI rules).

RUNNING START PROGRAM

Questions and Answers

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Attendance

- Q-1. May a district require that a student attend the high school for the purpose of completing the state's culminating project high school graduation requirement?**
- A. Yes. See answers to Q-51 and Q-59.
- Q-2. If a student has completed 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 graduation requirements with or without a diploma satisfies the compulsory attendance requirement. [RCW 28A.225.010](#) See also Q-34.
- Q-3. Can a student withdraw from a class taken through Running Start without the permission of the high school or school district?**
- A. Yes. School districts should closely coordinate with colleges to insure that the student does not become truant due to the withdrawal from the Running Start Class. The student may have to be enrolled in additional high school coursework to avoid truancy.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Credit and Financial Aid Eligibility

- Q-4. May a high school 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 credit?**
- A. No. [RCW 28A. 230.090 and 1997 c 222](#) has established that five-quarter (credit) hours shall equal one high school credit. School districts therefore, are required to grant one full high school credit for every five-quarter credit hours of work successfully completed by a Running Start student.
- Q-5. 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 applied to all high school students.
- Q-6. May high school districts split the credits between required and elective courses?**
- A. Yes, but not on a uniform rate basis, but rather on a case-by-case evaluation of the extent to which a college course is the equivalent of required high school course work. An arbitrary uniform rate is squarely at odds with the course-by-course comparison and judgment required by [WAC 392-169-050](#). It is permissible for the common school district superintendent, 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 credits equals one high school credit basis.
- Q-7. Can a district refuse to establish Occupational Education or Fine Arts dual credit equivalencies?**
- A. Yes. Each high school or school district board of directors has the authority to adopt course equivalencies for career and technical education courses offered to students. However, the Legislature has also made it clear that its legislative intent "is to encourage maximum student access." School districts are encouraged to establish any and all appropriate equivalencies, reflecting legislative intent for this program.

Q-8. 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.

Q-9. Are Running Start students allowed to take online classes for dual credit?

A. Yes.

Q-10. May a Running Start student "challenge" a course and have the high school pay for the credits?

A. No.

Q-11. 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.

Q-12. Do Washington community and technical college 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 community and technical 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 and 4-year colleges. The receiving school has the right to determine which credits they will accept.

Q-13. Do credits earned through dual enrollment programs like Running Start affect a student's NCAA eligibility?

A. No. NCAA Bylaw 14.2.2.3 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).

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. For NCAA Division I only, college courses must be placed on the student's high school transcript.

Q-14. 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 state financial aid. Students are encouraged to inquire with the college 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).

Institutions may use their institutional financial aid fund for these students if they choose. Institutional policy will determine if Running Start students have met "ability to benefit (ATB)" by their placement test scores (and college level courses successfully completed), and it is a campus decision whether to allow "ATB" in lieu of high school graduation. Students must be reminded that there is a maximum timeframe for receiving financial aid that will be affected if they use it for unsubsidized college credits while in Running Start.

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 financial strength, not participation in Running Start. Having earned credits as a Running Start student will, however, affect the length of time a student can continue to receive aid, the satisfactory academic progress evaluation, as well as 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 school'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 Credits From Running Start Accepted By the School			
And the four-year College's Maximum Timeframe policy is:	And the Minimum Needed For a BA Degree is:	The maximum credits that can be earned before losing student aid eligibility is:	And the remaining credits that can be earned without jeopardizing student aid is:
150%	180	270	180
125%	180	225	135

Appeals of the Timeframe

Depending on the school, individual students may be allowed to appeal the 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-School on Maximum Annual Federal Student Loan Amounts

The federal student loan programs permit higher awards for second- and third-year students than for first-year students. Running Start students who achieve third-year 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 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. The awarding of institutional scholarships is controlled by each college.

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

Many four-year universities and colleges have adopted advantageous policies that permit Running Start students to apply for scholarships that are otherwise reserved for students with freshman status. All students, however, should check with the scholarship office of the school they are transferring to for an understanding of the school's policy.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
Disability Services

- Q-15. 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 and universities must cover the costs of complying with ADA or section 504 for Running Start students who are enrolled in classes located at the college or university.

Q-16. Who is responsible for covering the costs associated with special education services that are outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP)?

- A. School districts are responsible for providing the services outlined in a properly formulated Individualized Education Program (IEP) for an eligible student. Colleges and high schools should work together to ensure that students' needs are being met.

Q-17. How long is a student with an IEP or section 504 plan eligible for Running Start?

- A. Running Start is intended to provide the equivalent of two academic years of 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. It is also possible that 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 the diploma so long as the courses being taken continue to address specific credit requirements necessary for high school graduation and the student is otherwise eligible.

Q-18. 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 or trump that requirement. Under the law, a transition plan is simply a course of instruction that is part of a student's IEP.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Eligibility

Q-19. What are an FTE and AAFTE?

FTE (Full Time Equivalent) is the term used to measure a student's enrollment. FTE at the high school is based on instructional minutes. 300 daily minutes or 1,500 weekly minutes equals 1.00 FTE. For Running Start, FTE is based on college credits. 15 college credits equal 1.00 FTE.

An AAFTE (Annual Average Full Time Equivalent) represents the annual average total of full-time equivalents for a student enrolled on the nine monthly enrollment count dates of the school year. Running Start students must not exceed a combined high school and college FTE maximum of 1.20 in either the monthly or yearly average calculations or the student will be charged for college tuition.

Q-20. Must the high schools/districts and community and technical colleges use the state-wide Running Start Enrollment Verification Form?

- A. Yes. Each Running Start student must have a Running Start Enrollment Verification Form for each quarter with all four signature lines signed.

Q-21. How frequently will the Running Start Enrollment Verification Forms be updated by OSPI and the SBCTC?

- A. The state-wide Running Start Enrollment Verification Form will be updated by OSPI and the SBCTC once per year on February 1st. This should accommodate fall registration timelines. Input will be requested from users prior to revision.

Students must complete and submit a new form for each quarter of Running Start enrollment.

Q-22. May a student change their high school or college course schedule after the Running Start Verification Form has been signed?

- A. Any changes to the student schedule at either the college or high school will necessitate the completion of a new Running Start Enrollment Verification Form to insure that all parties understand the impact of the changes.

- Q-23. May a student elect to take more than a combined 1.20 FTE of high school and college classes in a college quarter?**
- A. Yes. A student may elect to take additional college classes above the 1.20 FTE, but they must pay for those additional college credits. See also Q-52 and Q-56.
- Q-24. May a Running Start student be enrolled full-time at the college or university and also enroll in a class at the high school?**
- A. Yes. A student may be counted as eligible for Running Start funding for up to a combined 1.20 FTE between the high school and the college or university with a maximum of 1.00 FTE at each institution. This requires very close monitoring and agreement by representatives of both institutions. The student is reported on the high school's enrollment report, as well as on the enrollment report at the college or university. A student may enroll for more than the 1.20 FTE or 15 credits provided they pay tuition or get a low-income tuition waiver.
- Q-25. May a school district condition a student's eligibility for enrollment of a student in the Running Start Program upon a determination by school district 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 to make. [WAC 392-169-045](#)
- Q-26. May a school district 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 to impose additional requirements or conditions upon a student who meets the minimum requirements imposed by law.
- Q-27. How is junior/senior standing determined?**
- A. It is the responsibility of the common school district 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. See also Q-71.
- Q-28. May a student start the Running Start Program mid-year?**
- A. Yes. Students may start at any time during their junior or senior academic year (excluding summer).
Note, however, that in order to receive the full benefit of the Running Start program allowable under the law, students should start at the beginning of the fall quarter/semester of their junior year in high school. [WAC 392169-055](#)
- Q-29. 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 graduate from high school. 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](#)
- Q-30. Can a student have all the credits for a diploma and still attend Running Start if they do not take the step of graduating?** (This is the same question as Q-53. It is included under two different topics because it pertains to both.)
- A. No. Students who have completed all the credits needed for high school graduation are no longer eligible to participate in Running Start. But note that a student's eligibility for Running Start is determined at the beginning of each school year and does not change mid-year. That means that a student who completes all of his or her high school graduation requirements after the beginning of the school year continues to be eligible for Running Start until he or she graduates. [WAC 392-169-020](#)

- Q-31. Can a student in second-year senior status stay in Running Start just to complete an associate degree?**
- A. No.
- Q-32. May a high school deny Running Start participation to students under the age of 21?**
- A. No, not if the student meets eligibility requirements.
- Q-33. Can a Running Start student retake a course to improve their grade?**
- A. Yes, if repeating the course is allowed by both high school and college local policies.
- Q-34. 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](#).
- Q-35. 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 quarter. 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.
- Q-36. May a student who has been previously expelled from high school enroll in a college course for reimbursement through Running Start?**
- A. Yes, contingent upon being reenrolled in a high school.
- Q-37. 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 after enrolling in Running Start, attends an institution of higher education located in the new school district, 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 of initial Running Start enrollment for high school graduation, funding, and other purposes under the Running Start Program. [WAC 392-169-020\(2\)](#)
- Q-38. 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](#)
- Q-39. Do Running Start students need to meet all district and state graduation requirements in order to earn a district high school diploma?**
- A. Yes.
- Q-40. May Running Start students earning a district high school diploma be excused from the required statewide proficiency tests because the testing conflicts with college classes?**
- A. No. 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.
- Q-41. If a Running Start student withdraws from the college, can the high school prohibit the student from returning to the high school?**
- A. No. It is the duty of the high school to provide an education for students residing in the district as otherwise provided by law.

- Q-42. 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 the program to all pupils in grades ten, eleven, and twelve and the parents and guardians of those pupils, including 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](#). To assist the district in planning, a pupil shall inform the district of the pupil's 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](#)
- Q-43. Who determines which university or college the students will attend?**
- A. The students and their parents. Although students will generally attend the institution closest to their high school district, they may attend any eligible state institution of higher education.
- Q-44. 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.
- Q-45. Can a school 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 school district cannot keep a student from participating.
- Q-46. Can a college or university 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 efficient class size, or a student's ability to benefit from a particular class, course or program.
- Q-47. Can a school district impose a registration deadline or otherwise limit registration times for Running Start?**
- A. No. However, the college can impose a registration deadline. It is recommended that high schools and colleges work together to define a mutually agreeable deadline for registration. Schedules must include enough flexibility not to impede students' Running Start participation.
- Q-48. Can colleges ask for students' immigration and/or residency status on Running Start application forms?**
- A. No. Residency and immigration status are not a factor for Running Start students. Students' residency is established by their eligibility to enroll in their home high school. This question should not appear on Running Start application forms.
- Q-49. Can a student residing outside of Washington take online courses with Washington colleges through Running Start?**
- A. No. Running Start funding is only available to Washington residents enrolled in a Washington public high school and living in Washington.
- Q-50. Can schools that have accepted nonresident students under the "choice" legislation send a student back to their home high school if they want to participate in Running Start?**
- A. No. School districts must have a policy establishing rational, fair, and equitable standards for acceptance and rejection of applications for nonresident attendance. If a student is admitted to a school district under that policy, Running Start participation should not be a basis for disenrolling the student.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Fees & Tuition

Q-51. May a high school seek reimbursement from a Running Start student for failure of a course?

A. No.

Q-52. May colleges charge fees to Running Start students?

A. Yes. Running Start students attending community and technical colleges must pay mandatory fees. Four-year institutions may charge technology fees. Colleges and universities must make available fee waivers for low income Running Start students. 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.

Colleges and universities are authorized to charge Running Start students up to 10 percent of tuition and fees in addition to other mandatory fees. [RCW 28A.600.310](#)

Q-53. What is the credit maximum for student tuition and when do colleges charge extra tuition for overloads taken by students?

A. Running Start students may enroll tuition-free for a maximum of 15 credits per quarter or a combined 1.20 FTE. When a Running Start student seeks even more credits, colleges should charge appropriate per-credit rates for any credits beyond the 15 credit maximum or beyond 1.20 FTE.

Q-54. 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.

Q-55. Can GET (Guaranteed Education Tuition) credits be used to pay for unsubsidized college tuition?

A. GET accounts may be used to pay for books and other eligible out-of-pocket expenses that are required for Running Start courses, including the unsubsidized portion of tuition expenses.

Q-56. Are low income tuition waivers available for community and technical college students who want to take additional credits above the combined 1.20 FTE limit?

A. Starting winter quarter 2012, low income Running Start students at the community and technical colleges are eligible for tuition waivers for credits they choose to take above the 1.20 FTE or 15 credits. Low income may be defined as eligible for free or reduced lunch at the high school – check requirements per local college.

Q-57. Are community and technical colleges 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 (Resolution 11-6-35, approved June 23, 2011) for one college credit for those Running Start students with eligibility per the Running Start Enrollment Verification Form for **exactly** 9 Running Start Tuition-Free College Credits (0.60 FTE) who enroll for **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.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Foreign Exchange / International Students / Study Abroad

Q-58. Are foreign exchange students eligible to participate in Running Start?

- A. Yes. Running Start satisfies high school credit and attendance requirements. The exception is that students with an F-1 visa who are paying full tuition to attend high school are not eligible to participate.

Q-59. 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. The college can invoice high schools for the standard Running Start reimbursement rate. Students are responsible for any additional costs.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Graduation Requirements

Q-60. Can the district require progress toward the district diploma and require that students not only earn credits, but complete other requirements for graduation, such as the Culminating Project and High School and Beyond Plans?

- A. Yes. However, the intent of Running Start law is to encourage maximum student access to the Running Start program. Districts should not adopt policies and procedures that intentionally create barriers to student participation in the program. Requiring daily attendance in a culminating project class would logically hinder participation. Districts that have such requirements are strongly encouraged to offer accommodations to students participating in Running Start.

Q-61. Does a student seeking a high school diploma through an associate degree at the college need to complete a culminating project requirement?

- A. No.

Q-62. Can a student have all the credits for a diploma and still attend Running Start if they do not take the step of graduating? (This is the same question as Q-23. It is included under two different topics because it pertains to both.)

- A. No. Students who have completed all the credits needed for high school graduation are no longer eligible to participate in Running Start. But note that a student's eligibility for Running Start is determined at the beginning of each school year and does not change mid-year. That means that a student who completes all of his or her high school graduation requirements after the beginning of the school year continues to be eligible for Running Start until he or she graduates. [WAC 392-169-020](#)

Q-63. 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 degree. Students must provide a written request to the college registrar's office (or designee) to receive a high school diploma from the college. [RCW 28B.50.535](#).

- Q-64. 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.
- Q-65. Should secondary schools 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, under the provisions of [RCW 28B.50.535](#) (SHB 1758) and Running Start?**
- 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 (and related Adequate Yearly Progress implications), students who are successful in earning their high school diploma under the provisions of [RCW 28B.50.535](#) will count as graduates of the home high school, and 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.
- Q-66. If a student earns a high school diploma through the college as provided in SHB 1758, how would the secondary school document the student as a graduate, and thereby get credit that the student graduated?**
- 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](#), the high school may withdraw the student using the Withdrawal code “GA” (Graduated through associate degree).
- Q-67. If a Running Start student earns an associate degree after their expected graduation date can they be documented in their student record as an extended graduation student so that it will not count against the secondary school for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)?**
- A. Yes, though it would be a rare case for a student to maintain Running Start eligibility after their expected high school graduation date. If the student retained Running Start eligibility as a second-year senior student and completed remaining requirements for an associate degree, the high school, if informed by the college, could code the student “GA”.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Homeschool / Private School Students

- Q-68. May home schooled and private schooled students enroll in the Running Start Program?**
- A. Yes. Any student seeking credit through Running Start must enroll through the local public school district or high school, and have obtained junior or senior standing. Junior or senior standing is determined in accordance with a school district’s grade placement policies. The home school student so enrolled does not have 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 and students attending private schools approved under chapter 28A.195 RCW 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\(1\)](#)
- 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 or programs offered by institutions of higher education 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 courses or programs offered by the institution of higher education. [OSPI Bulletin No. 098-07](#)
- 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.

- Q-69. 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](#).
- Q-70. 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\(2\)](#).
- Q-71. How is junior/senior standing determined for private schools and home schooled students who wish to participate in Running Start?**
- A. For students seeking admission to Running Start, it is the responsibility of the common school district to establish grade placement criteria. 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. Any district criteria used to establish grade placement must be applied uniformly to students, regardless of intent to enroll in Running Start or of intent to graduate from the high school. See also Q-27.
- Q-72. 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 appeal. See [WAC 392-169-020\(3\)](#) and OSPI's [2010-2011 Enrollment Reporting Handbook](#).
- Q-73. A homeschool student is in 11th grade, but wants to take a year off next year as a declared homeschool student to then return the following year and become a 12th grader to do Running Start. 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 placed as either a 12th grade senior or a second-year senior. [WAC 392-169-020\(3\)](#)
- Q-74. A homeschool student did not utilize third quarter (Spring) of Grade 11 eligibility due to illness. Can that third quarter be carried over so that the student can utilize six quarters of enrollment?**
- A. No. Junior year eligibility would be complete. However, the student would be eligible for the three quarters of 12th grade and may be eligible for the second-year senior year. [WAC 392-169-055\(4\)](#) Running Start eligibility is not based on six quarters. It is based on two academic years for junior and senior standing only.
- Q-75. Does a school district have to post Running Start course grades in the grade history file of a homeschool student who is only taking Running Start classes?**
- A. Yes. All earned credit must be recorded on an official school transcript. See also Q-86.
- Q-76. May a school district or school award a diploma to a private school student who enrolls in the public district, but takes classes only through Running Start?**
- A. Yes.
- Q-77. Are private school and home-based instruction students who have enrolled in Running Start exempt from the new 1.20 FTE limitation?**
- A. No. All students are eligible for up to a maximum of 1.00 FTE or 15 credits at the college and a combined public high school and college FTE of 1.20. A Running Start Verification Form should be completed and on file for these students.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Parental Rights and Responsibilities

- Q-78. Is the parent of a Running Start student entitled to review attendance and grade information held by the college or university?**
- A. It depends on whether the parent claims the student as a dependent for income tax purposes. Under FERPA law, students attending 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 children to review their child's education records without the consent of the student. Proof of dependency is usually provided by 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).
- Q-79. 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, alternative options must be arranged by faculty. Most Running Start Coordinators collect a blanket permission form early in the enrollment process.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Student Activities

- Q-80. 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.
- Q-81. 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 WIAA guidelines.
NOTE: WIAA guidelines allow participation by Running Start students.
- Q-82. Can a 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. Any Running Start student remains eligible to enroll in classes at the high school, as well as participate in extracurricular activities as outlined by local district policy. Participation in the high school graduation ceremony is to be determined by local district policy and is not linked to state statute related to diploma requirements.
- Q-83. 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 being selected were 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 eligibility threshold is 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.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Transcript Information

- Q-84. 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. It must be posted as a "W" on the high school transcript.
- Q-85. 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. 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. It is possible for a student to receive high school credit, but not college credit, in the situation described.
- Q-86. Are all Running Start courses shown on the high school transcript?**
- A. Yes. Running Start courses need to be recorded on the transcript. The standardized transcript must contain a designation of "R" for courses completed and credit earned through Running Start. [WAC 392-415-070](#)
See also Q-75.
- Q-87. Are colleges required to send individual transcripts to school districts in order to provide evidence of successful completion of courses taken through the program?**
- A. No. Nothing in law or administrative code ([WAC 392-169-085](#)) mandates that a school 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.
- Q-88. 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.