



Expanding Opportunities to Earn College Credit at Rural Title I High Schools in Hawai'i:

A Case Study of Dual-Credit Programs

October 2015

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About Education Northwest

Founded as a nonprofit corporation in 1966, Education Northwest builds capacity in schools, families, and communities through applied research and development.

We serve as external evaluators of GEAR UP Hawai'i, and conducted this case study of dual-credit programs at five public high schools in Hawai'i at the request of GEAR UP Hawai'i.

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Cover photo: The authors took the photograph while visiting Kohala High School, one of the site visit schools.

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Michelle Hodara
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Introduction

Dual credit is for everybody. Some people in this school think it's only for the smart people. But it's really not. It's for people who want to learn and better themselves.

(High school student at a case study school)

Background on Dual Credit Nationally and in Hawai'i

Dual-credit programs, which allow high school students to take college courses, are believed to have a number of benefits. In addition to the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school, benefits include providing high school students access to rigorous college-level coursework; improving “college knowledge” and, as a result, easing their transition to college; and enhancing the connection between secondary and postsecondary systems, their stakeholders, and curricula (Allen, 2010).

As of result of these perceived benefits, education stakeholders and policymakers, across the country view the expansion of accelerated college credit programs as one strategy in a larger effort to improve students’ postsecondary readiness and completion (Glancy et al., 2014). These programs include dual credit (also called dual enrollment), Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB). Currently, 25 states require all public school districts to offer dual credit, AP, and/or IB (Glancy et al., 2014). During the 2010–2011 school year, 82 percent of U.S. high schools reported having students enrolled in dual credit, and 69 percent reported enrollments in AP or IB courses (Thomas, Marken, Gray, & Lewis, 2013).

Hawai'i does not currently require school districts to offer accelerated college credit programs (Glancy et al., 2014), but the state is committed to the availability of dual credit through a number of statewide dual-credit programs. To date, the most widespread program is “Running Start,” a partnership between the Hawaii Department of Education (HI DOE) and University of Hawai'i (UH) system that allows students to take college courses and earn college credit.¹ All UH campuses guarantee acceptance of college credits earned through Running Start.

In June 2015, the legislature passed senate bill SB374, which aims to broaden access and participation in all forms of dual credit. The bill states that statewide dual-credit policies will encompass all dual-credit programs in the state, including “Running Start.” The legislation expands participation in dual credit from high school juniors and seniors to freshmen, sophomores, and home-schooled students. The legislation also states that student readiness for dual-credit college courses can be evaluated based on multiple assessment measures rather than just a traditional standardized assessment. Finally, it removes language stating that all dual-credit students must remit tuition and fees, accounting for various funding sources that cover

¹ For a description of Running Start, see: <https://www.hawaii.edu/runningstart/>

students' tuition and fees. However, the legislature is not providing additional funds to cover these student expenses.

The state also views earning college credits as a key strategy to improve college and career readiness. Effective with the graduating class of 2016, students who want to earn the state's honors diploma must earn credits for two college courses, equivalent to passing two AP, IB, and/or Running Start (dual-credit) courses.²

GEAR UP Hawai'i, a federally funded program, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, supports a large number of programs and initiatives that seek to increase the number of low-income students who enter and succeed in college. One strategy to reach this goal is supporting low-income high school students' access to "early college programs" through scholarship programs to take college courses, and through the expansion of college course offerings in low-income high schools.

Specifically, GEAR UP covers tuition and books for individual students who receive free or reduced-price lunch and participate in traditional Running Start. **Traditional Running Start** is when an individual high school student takes a college course on a UH college campus. Additionally, GEAR UP covers the cost of tuition and books for low-income students who participate in high school-based Running Start. **High school-based Running Start** is when an entire classroom of high school students takes a UH college course at their high school.

GEAR UP Hawai'i's financial support to low-income Running Start participants and schools is critical to expanding access to college courses since the cost of tuition and fees associated with taking college courses often deters high school students from dual-credit participation (Griffith, 2009).

Most recently, in 2014, GEAR UP partnered with the Castle Foundation to expand funding and support for early college by selecting 12 public high schools, through a competitive grant program, to design and implement **Early College High School (ECHS)** programs. Through ECHS, classrooms of students take free college classes at their high school and receive academic tutoring and other support. Additionally, the ECHS grantees share best practices and provide support to each other through

Dual-Credit Programs

Traditional Running Start:

Individual high school students take college courses on college campus.

High school-based Running Start: Classrooms of high school students take college courses at high school.

Early College High School: Classrooms of high school students take college courses at high school as part of a cohesive program that offers academic and other support.

² Diploma requirements are available at:

<http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/TeachingAndLearning/StudentLearning/GraduationRequirements/Pages/Graduation-Requirements-2016-and-beyond.aspx>

regular meetings facilitated by an expert consultant. ECHS funding lasts for three years. We will discuss Running Start and ECHS dual-credit models in greater detail in subsequent sections of this report.

Purpose of Case Study and Research Questions

GEAR UP Hawai'i is committed to improving low-income high school students' access to college courses and, as a result, requested that Education Northwest, the external evaluator of GEAR UP Hawai'i, conduct a case study to understand barriers and facilitators of participation in Running Start. To do so, we (authors of the study) visited five rural, Title I high schools in Hawai'i and conducted interviews with staff and students. Since two of the five schools in our study are ECHS grantees, we examined ECHS programs as well.

This case study is guided by three main questions:

1. How are dual-credit programs implemented at these schools?
2. What are barriers and facilitators of dual credit implementation and participation?
3. What are stakeholder perspectives on dual credit?

The following sections of the study report present:

- A description of five rural Title I high schools we visited
- The traditional Running Start model
- New high school-based dual-credit models
- How dual-credit models fit within a larger system that aims to build students' college readiness
- Recommendations

In presenting each of the dual-credit models, we discuss barriers and facilitators of implementation and participation. At the end of the report, we provide recommendations for a broad range of stakeholders, including policymakers interested in expanding and sustaining dual-credit programs, superintendents and principals interested in implementing these programs, and students interested in participating in these programs.

School Descriptions

In partnership with GEAR UP Hawai'i staff, we selected five Title I public high schools to visit for this case study (Figure 1). We targeted a variety of schools in different geographic locations across the state, of various sizes and demographic populations (Table 1). These schools also have differing levels of participation in traditional Running Start, which we will discuss in more detail in subsequent sections. We generally discuss schools in the order that we visited them.

Figure 1
Location of Case Study Schools in the State of Hawai'i

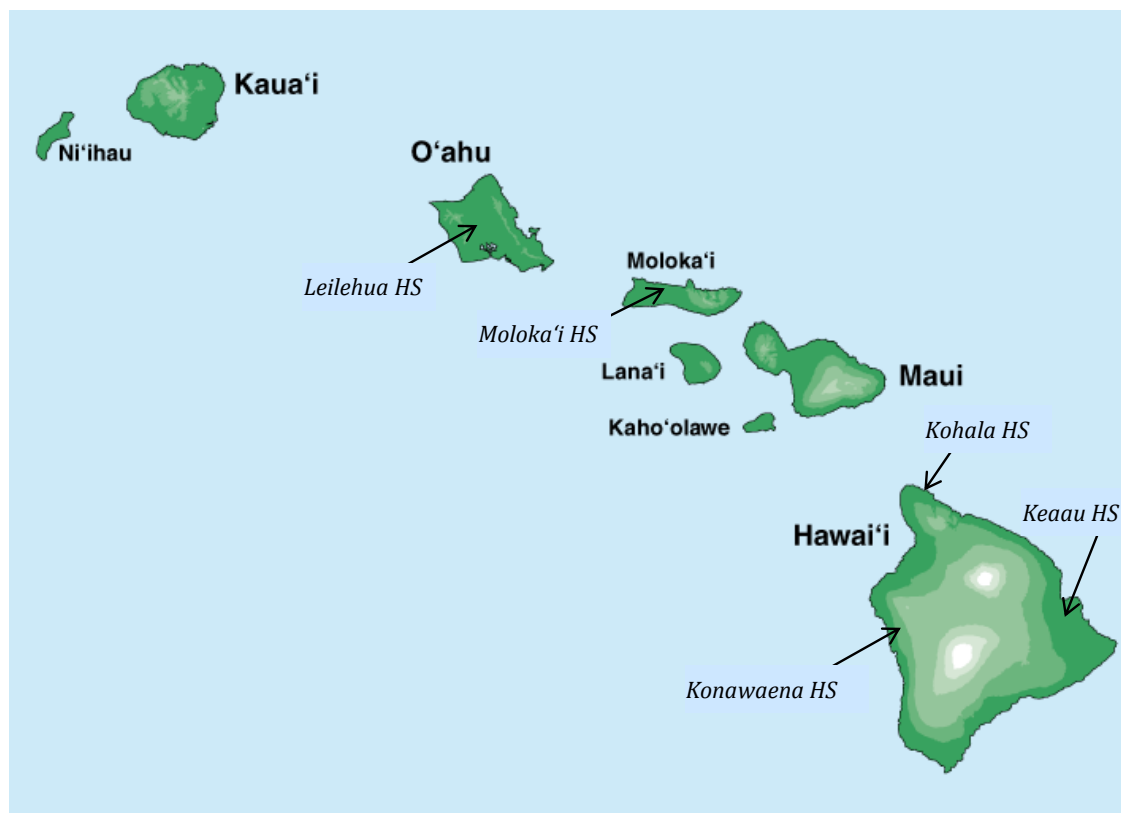


Table 1
Demographics of the Five Case Study High Schools

	Fall Enrollment	% FRPL	Major racial/ethnic groups						
			Native Hawaiian	Filipino	White	Latino	Japanese	Pacific Islander	All Other
Leilehua HS	1,803	51%	17%	25%	19%	7%	5%	11%	16%
Moloka'i HS	336	69%	76%	14%	5%	<1%	1%	1%	2%
Konawaena HS	733	61%	35%	13%	21%	9%	9%	8%	5%
Keaau HS	832	76%	44%	24%	12%	4%	3%	6%	7%
Kohala HS	276	65%	38%	28%	13%	7%	2%	2%	10%

Note: FRPL = free or reduced price lunch

Source: 2013-14 School Status Improvement Report

Leilehua High School is on the island of Oahu in the town of Wahiawa. Although the school is less than 30 minutes away from Honolulu, it is considered a rural school because of its relative isolation in the center of the island. There are a number of military bases in the community, and about one-quarter of the student body is from military families, so the school has a very mobile student population. Leilehua, with a student population of 1,800, is the largest school we visited. It also has a very diverse student body, and is our only case study school with a sizable Black student population (about 10% of the student body, and captured in the category “All Other” in Table 1).

Leilehua High School’s Title I status changes frequently because about half of its student body is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch; sometimes the proportion dips below half and sometimes above. The fluctuation in Title I status affects access to funds for a variety of programs and initiatives directed to low-income schools.

Moloka’i High School is on the rural island of Moloka’i, which is one of the smaller Hawaiian Islands, with a population of about 7,000. The largest industry on Moloka’i is agriculture, and the high school mascot is the “Farmer.” The school also has an agricultural program with a greenhouse and plot of land where students grow fruit and vegetables in front of the school. The high school is relatively small, with a student population of 336, and it reflects the island’s population, which is mostly Native Hawaiian (Table 1).

Konawaena High School serves students on the South Kona side of Hawai’i Island, often called the Big Island, where coffee farms and other family farms blanket the region. The Konawaena campus includes the high school, middle school, and elementary school; and the high school is mid-sized, serving over 700 students. Similar to other case study schools, the school has an extremely diverse student population (Table 1), reflecting the diversity of the Kona community.

Keaau High School is located on the east side of the Big Island and is the newest school we visited. Because lava from the Kilauea volcano was flowing in the path of the neighboring school of Pahoa High School, the district moved students from Pahoa High School to Keaau High School in early 2015. At the time of data collection, Keaau served more than 1,000 students, including those from Pahoa High School. At the close of the 2014–15 school year, Pahoa students moved back to their home campus. Over two-thirds of Keaau students are Native Hawaiian or Filipino (Table 1).

Kohala High School is located at the northern most point of the Big Island in a beautiful, isolated region with rolling hills and cattle ranches. Kohala High School is adjacent to the elementary school and is the smallest school we visited, with a high school enrollment of less than 300. Similar to Keaau High School, most students are Native Hawaiian or Filipino (Table 1).

Kohala High School and Moloka’i High School are two of the 12 ECHS grantees in the state. These two schools are also the most rural schools we visited. The closest sizable town to Kohala

HS, still 54 miles away, is Kailua-Kona, with a population of around 12,000. There are no densely populated towns or cities on Moloka'i. The local tour magazine describes Moloka'i as "the last Hawaiian place cherishing a history of isolation and a sense of remoteness."

Data Collection and Analysis

At each school, we conducted between six and eight semi-structured interviews with principals, vice principals, counselors, and teachers. Each interview lasted about one hour. We also conducted two one-hour student focus groups at each school; one focus group included students who had taken or were taking a dual-credit course through one of the dual-credit programs previously described. Students in these focus groups included participants of traditional Running Start at two schools, high school-based Running Start at another two schools, and ECHS at one school. The other focus group included students who had never taken a dual-credit course, although many had taken or were taking Advanced Placement courses. Each focus group consisted of 6 to 10 students, and focus group protocols can be found in the appendix.

After conducting the site visits, we consolidated our notes into structured summaries of each visit. We described the traditional dual-credit model and new dual-credit model at each school, implementation challenges associated with each model, and approaches to addressing challenges. We also commented on a key theme that emerged from our interviews around how dual-credit programs are connected to, and interact with, other courses (most notably, AP) and programs (most notably, AVID) that also seek to prepare students for college. Finally, our site visit summaries identified quotes from each school that represented stakeholder perspectives captured in interview and focus group notes.

Traditional Running Start: Barriers and Facilitators

What Traditional Running Start Looks Like

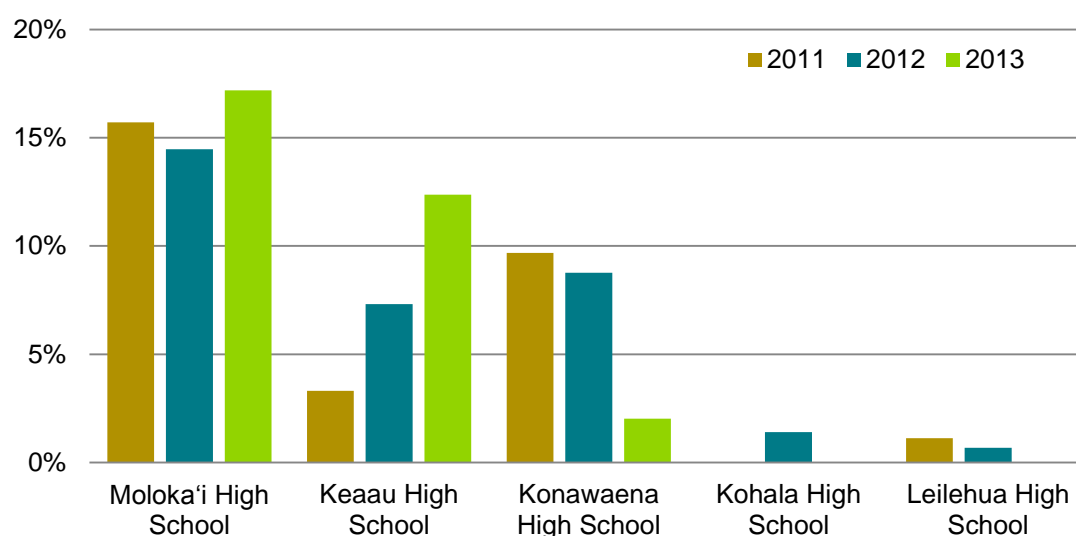
Across all schools, traditional Running Start is fairly similar. Individual students must complete a Running Start application, where they identify their planned campus, term, and course. They also have to fulfill the requirements of the college campus, which include completing the college admissions form, passing the appropriate COMPASS placement exam (i.e., scoring at or above the cutoff score on the COMPASS placement exam required to enroll in that UH college course), and submitting recent Tuberculosis (TB) and Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) immunization records. For the remainder of this report, we refer to the Running Start and UH application requirements as simply the “application process.”

Students admitted to UH then travel to the nearest college campus and take regular college courses taught by college instructors. Most of the participants we spoke with took English 100, the first college-level English course, English 102, Sociology 100, and/or Psychology 100.

Students and their families are responsible for tuition and fees. GEAR UP covers the cost of tuition and books for students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Project Ho’oku ‘i is a project at UH Manoa’s College of Education with the goal of increasing the number of Native Hawaiian students who enroll in postsecondary education through increasing participation in dual-credit programs, like Running Start. The project covers the cost of tuition and books for Native Hawaiian students who participate in Running Start, provides a gas stipend to get to and from the college campus, and provides tutorial services to support participants’ academic success in the college course.

Participation in Running Start varies across the five schools and is generally quite low (see Figure 2). In the following section, we will discuss barriers to participation.

Figure 2
Percentage of Students in 2011, 2012, 2013 Graduating Classes Who Took Traditional Running Start



Source: 2011, 2012, and 2013 College and Career Readiness Indicator Reports:
<http://www.p20hawaii.org/resources/college-and-career-readiness-indicators-reports/>

Barriers

A former GEAR UP Hawai'i staff member, Jean Osumi, studied mechanisms underlying student participation in traditional Running Start. In Osumi's dissertation (2010), she identified three primary barriers to participation: "conflicts in the secondary and postsecondary schedules, associated costs for tuition, fees and books, and transportation." Additionally she found that schools did not employ proactive recruitment strategies, but instead "relied on students to 'self-identify' themselves as interested in the program."

Our case study confirms Jean Osumi's findings on both barriers to participation and how students end up taking Running Start. Below we briefly describe how these barriers played out at the schools we visited. We then discuss two key facilitators of traditional Running Start participation.

Distance and Transportation Issues to the Nearest College Campus

The schools we visited vary in their distance to the closest UH campus (Table 2), but all staff members and students discussed challenges students had getting to a UH college campus. The Kohala HS staff spoke of distance to UH campuses as an insurmountable barrier to participating in Running Start for their students, not only because the campuses are 81 miles away from the school, but because the journey requires driving on dark, rural roads, sometimes inundated with heavy, dangerous wind and rain. Leilehua HS students face a different challenge: Most students do not have access to a car, so they would have to take the public bus

outside of town to get to Leeward Community College (LCC)—something most students had no experience doing.

Table 2
Distance to Closest University Of Hawai'i (UH) Campus

School	Distance	Campus
Leilehua HS	12 miles	Leeward Community College
Moloka'i HS	8 miles	UH Maui College campus on Moloka'i
Konawaena HS	1 mile (until fall 2015) 19 miles (as of fall 2015)	Hawai'i Community College (West Hawai'i campus – campus moving in fall 2015)
Keaau HS	8 miles	UH Hilo and Hawai'i Community College
Kohala HS	81 miles	UH Hilo and Hawai'i Community College

Source: Google maps using distance between high school and college campus.

Students who managed to participate in Running Start discussed at length the difficulties with getting to campus, which often included cobbling together different forms of transportation from family and friends that varied from week to week. Only students from Konawaena HS could walk to campus, since the West Hawai'i - Hawai'i Community College campus was only a mile away. However, the campus is moving to a new location in fall 2015, making it nearly impossible for students to travel to campus for classes. Consequently, the school's staff is developing a new way for students to take college classes, which we will discuss in the next section of this report.

Conflicting High School and College Schedules

A number of high schools had a rotating schedule, so the same class did not occur at the same time every day. If a student were to leave campus to take a college course at the same time each day, they would end up missing multiple high school classes. Therefore, at these schools, it was not possible for students to participate in Running Start during the school day. Students at schools that did not have a rotating schedule also experienced challenges, since the time it took to travel made them miss part of the high school course that was scheduled before and after the period they took to attend the college class. Teachers spoke about being very flexible with these students—allowing them to leave their class early or enter late. However, missing part of their high school classes was a less-than-ideal situation for Running Start participants.

As a result of conflicting schedules, most Running Start participants took courses after school, typically at night. Taking classes over the summer was less common because colleges offered fewer courses over the summer. This led to another factor affecting participation: students who were involved in afterschool activities could not participate in Running Start, or had to fit Running Start courses into an extremely packed afterschool schedule.

Lack of Information and Support Provided to Students

For the most part, the schools did not rigorously promote traditional Running Start because almost all school staff members did not view the program as a viable way for students to earn college credit. Yet, all school staff members we spoke to were deeply committed to providing opportunities for their student body to earn college credit. Thus, they poured their time and energy into developing new high school-based dual-credit models that worked better for their context, rather than rely on the traditional Running Start program.

While some non-participants at a few schools recalled their school advertising Running Start in newsletters and during school announcements, the majority of non-participants we spoke with had little to no information about the program. Based on participant responses, participation in the program seem to result from individual students seeking out more information about the program or being encouraged to participate by a counselor, parent, or an older friend or sibling who had previously taken courses at a college campus while in high school. A participant said of Running Start, “The opportunity is out there, but you have to go after it.”

A related challenge was finding the resources and staff time to help students navigate the application process, which required, among other tasks, figuring out what course to take and how to pay for it, going to the doctor for immunizations, going to campus to take COMPASS, and preparing for and passing COMPASS. Two schools relied on “the mobile COMPASS lab,” a grant-funded community college program, to come to the high school campus and administer the COMPASS placement exam. But the mobile COMPASS lab program ended after its grant ended, and some staff members attributed a drop in Running Start participation to the loss of this support.

Facilitators

Resources for student recruitment & support

Only two schools—Moloka‘i and Keaau HS—had a staff member, the Project Ho‘oku‘i coordinator, with dedicated time to support the Running Start program. Although Project Ho‘oku‘i is a program for Native Hawaiian students, the coordinators support all Running Start participants. For example, at Moloka‘i HS, a long-time educator, who came out of retirement to run Project Ho‘oku‘i, supported Running Start in the following ways:

- Because he substitute teaches at the middle school, he encourages middle school students to start thinking about participating in Running Start. He then checks in with students every year to encourage them to apply for Running Start.
- He helps students through the application process.
- He connects with parents and provides them with clear information about the program so that they are committed to the task of driving their student to the college campus and supporting their student’s success in a college course.
- He checks in on the progress of students by visiting the campus every day and speaking with professors.

Moloka'i HS has the largest proportion of students taking traditional Running Start classes compared to all other site-visit schools; and in the last four years, about 60 students have earned college credit through the program. High participation and success are likely the result of having a campus that is somewhat close to the high school (8 miles) and a dedicated staff member that supports participants. However, as one student said, "Not every school has a Mr. [deleted name]" — a staff member devoted to Running Start. Therefore, the lesson from Moloka'i HS is that to expand participation in Running Start, or any dual-credit model, it is necessary to dedicate at least some staff time to student recruitment and support. We will return to this issue in a subsequent section of this report.

Building an Online Infrastructure

Even if the school can find resources to help with student recruitment and support, transportation issues and conflicting high school and college schedules are still enormous barriers for most schools. A second key strategy, then, is building an online infrastructure, so students can take online college courses during regular school hours at their high school. At every school, we heard about one or two students who were taking an online Running Start course during regular school hours. Still, schools lacked the resources to provide technical and academic support to students taking online courses. Staff members typically described this experience as involving a highly motivated student taking an online course alone in a counselor's office or classroom with a teacher or staff member checking-in on them once in a while.

However, we observed two new directions for schools. One was a fully online dual-credit model adopted by Leilehua HS, which we will describe in more detail in the next section. A teacher at Leilehua describes why the school adopted an online model:

We looked at the barriers to early college. Distance was one. Transportation was another...our schedule is crazy, so really the students could only go after school. The other barrier is that the students who are more likely to participate are also very busy, so they are in sports, clubs, volunteering, and working. So, we have had two, maybe three, students a year participate. So, through a series of events, we started looking at an online model and thinking that online classes might be good for our students. For a variety of reasons, it takes care of the transportation issue, it takes care of the bell schedule issue, and it takes care of the afterschool issue.

Second, all five schools are considering allowing students to sit in their high school-based dual-credit courses and take a different online college course through traditional Running Start. This situation would provide individual students with teacher support during their entire class period. All school staff members believed that expanding online college course opportunities to additional students would only work if they could also help students with the non-academic skills connected to success in an online course, such as time management and self-advocacy. A school staff member at Leilehua described the importance of having a high school instructor

involved in the online course to teach high school students how to interact with their online college instructor:

One of the most valuable things [the dual-credit HS instructor] taught them is to advocate for themselves. Students will just say, 'oh I got an F' and do nothing about it...So he spent a long time on email etiquette and how to email the professors. Some of them feel like it's disrespectful to question the teacher. But he taught them how to advocate for themselves. The second semester comes, and the professor says, 'they are emailing me all the time!' But, this is a good habit for them to develop because they have to be able to own their own education. So this is a hybrid model. When we took them on the field trip to LCC, they learned there is a writing center and there is a reading center and library. So, people will be there to help them, but they have to ask.

Summary

Despite the challenges associated with Running Start participation, students unanimously reported they had extremely positive experiences taking college courses on a college campus. They liked being in classrooms with real college students, and felt their college courses were more challenging, organized, and engaging than their high school courses. However, to expand the experience of taking college courses at a college campus to a broader range of students at high schools where it is feasible to travel to a college campus, the school must have a staff member who can provide students with some level of support. At some schools, this can be the Project Ho'oku'i coordinator. Schools without this coordinator may have to think creatively about finding a staff member, devoted to college and career readiness, who can help recruit and support Running Start participants. Finally, at schools where getting to the college campus and encountering conflicting schedules are insurmountable barriers, building an online infrastructure is a key strategy to allowing individual students to take online college courses.

New Dual-Credit Models: Barriers & Facilitators

What New Dual-credit Models Look Like

All schools are actively developing or implementing high school-based dual-credit models that allow them to expand participation in dual-credit courses as alternatives to traditional Running Start. These models serve whole classrooms of students on the high school campus rather than supporting individual students earning credit on a college campus. For the most part, either GEAR UP Hawai'i or the Early College High School grant program cover tuition and fees for all students. Students must complete the same application process as for traditional Running Start, but beyond the application process, traditional Running Start and these new dual-credit models are vastly different. Below is a brief description of each program; key features of these programs are summarized in Table 3.

Leilehua HS: “iReady” began in Fall 2014. It is a two-year program run by a high school teacher who provides a wide range of supports to students. Juniors prepare for the COMPASS, complete the application process, and participate in college planning activities and visits. Seniors take one online college course per term. Students who are already ready for UH college courses based on ACT scores can join the program, called “Kickstart,” as seniors. For more information about Leilehua’s iReady program visit <http://leilehuaearlycollege.weebly.com/>

Moloka'i HS: The school recruited 10th-grade students, who took COMPASS test prep in 2014–2015. The first college course will be offered to this group in fall 2015 during the school’s college and career readiness (CCR) elective period. A college instructor will teach the course, while the CCR teacher will provide tutoring and other support when the college instructor is not there. The school plans to offer at least one college course per term to cohorts of students beginning in their junior year after they take COMPASS test prep in their sophomore year.

Konawaena HS: Konawaena’s dual-credit program is still under development. The school recruited students in spring 2015, and the first college course is planned for fall 2015. The school plans to offer two or three college courses per term to juniors and seniors. A college instructor will teach the course two days a week, while a high school instructor will provide tutoring and other support one day a week.

Keaau HS: Juniors and seniors took the first college course, a Hawaiian Studies course, in spring 2015. The course took place after school, and a high school counselor, who is also a community college lecturer and thus certified to teach dual credit, taught the course. The school plans to offer at least one college course per term.

Kohala HS: Juniors and seniors took the first college course, a Sociology course, in spring 2015. To conform to the school schedule where the same class takes place three days a week, a college instructor taught the course two days a week, while a part-time instructor provided tutoring

and other support one day a week. Though the nearest college campus is 81 miles from Kohala, the course instructor resides in Honoka'a, about 32 miles from Kohala. The school plans to offer at least one college course per term.

Table 3
Features of New High School-Based Dual-Credit Models

	<i>High School-Based Running Start</i>			<i>Early College High School</i>	
	Leilehua HS	Konawaena HS	Keaau HS	Moloka'i HS	Kohala HS
When college course delivered	Online course during regular school hours (7 th period)	<i>During regular school hours</i>	After school (2:30-3:45), two days a week	<i>During college and career readiness period, extends into after school time</i>	During regular school hours
Who teaches course content	College instructor	<i>College instructor or HS teacher certified to teach dual credit</i>	HS counselor who is community college lecturer	<i>College instructor</i>	College instructor
College courses	ICS 101 (Digital Tools for the Information World) English 100	<i>English 100, Hawaiian Studies 100, Math 100, English 102</i>	Hawaiian Studies 100	<i>Humanities 100, English 100, Psychology 100,</i>	Sociology 100, <i>English 100, Business 150</i>
Type of HS instructor	Full-time teacher	<i>Part-time teacher</i>	N/A	<i>Part-time teacher</i>	Part-time teacher
Supports provided by HS instructor in course	Junior year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMPASS test prep • Application process support • College planning & visits Senior year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management, study skills, academic, and technological support • College planning & visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Academic support when college instructor not there</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College planning • Navigating UH's online portal "Laulima" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Academic support when college instructor not there</i> • <i>College planning</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic support when college instructor not there
Supports provided outside of course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent outreach • COMPASS test prep (math only) provided by college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent outreach • Application process support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent outreach • Application process support • COMPASS test prep • After school tutoring • Technical assistance from GEAR UP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent outreach • Application process support • ACT prep • Technical assistance from GEAR UP

Note: Shaded entries are planned, but not yet implemented.

Barriers

The new dual-credit models address the barriers of traditional Running Start in the following ways:

- Courses are on the high school campus.
- For the most part, courses take place during a regular class period.
- Due to larger enrollments in dual-credit, schools can now allocate staff time and resources to supporting students, through the application process and in the college course.

However, with the shift to delivering college courses on the high school campus, and an expansion in enrollment, three new barriers emerged.

Sustainability

Whether schools have dual-credit programs in place or are in the midst of developing such programs, they are all concerned about the sustainability issues. In fact, one school did not apply for the ECHS grant because a requirement of the grant is building a sustainable program, and the school is concerned about being able to sustain their new program.

Across the schools, staff members viewed the following as critical to running their high school-based dual-credit program; however, only one school had all of these resources and staff in place:

- Counselor to take care of student recruitment, parent outreach, and support through application process
- Registrar to manage numerous course scheduling issues since college and high school schedules do not align
- COMPASS test prep and bus transportation to college for students to take COMPASS
- High school instructor to cover the dual-credit class and provide academic support and tutoring one or two days a week when the college instructor is not there, before the college course starts, and after it ends

Nearly all school staff members voiced concerns about maintaining or implementing the additional resources that the high-school-based dual-credit models required. Additionally, administrators recognized that the additional tasks of student recruitment, parent outreach, and application process support were taxing on counselors; while deeply committed to these new programs, counselors found they were extremely time-consuming and required them to focus less on other counseling duties. Many staff members also worried that cuts in the school funding that allowed them to pay for a part-time high school teacher (who covered the course when the college course was not in session), or the loss of GEAR UP and other external funding sources that covered student tuition, would jeopardize their program.

Despite these concerns, staff expressed a commitment to trying to sustain these programs, as demonstrated by the following quotes, one from each school.

The opportunities are greater than the logistical obstacles we have to overcome.

(Principal)

The magic word is grant writing...I love the idea. My whole goal is to have this program flourish. Start it out and sustain it. This is not something like, 'Oh we'll try it and if it doesn't work, then ok.' No, we are not going to fail in this because it's the middle of the road students we're trying to help. It's to give everybody a chance.

(Teacher)

Last year, I was a representative from the school, and a bunch of district staff from Hawaii went to Texas to learn about their early college programs. They had slightly different models. But that generated a lot of discussion among the superintendent and principals about wanting to be much more proactive and aggressive with our options here. Because it is really working there and they have large numbers of students involved in the program, and they have much closer relationships with the local community colleges. And one of the things each Texas high school did have was that coordinator who helped facilitate the program. They got information out to the students, they got applications completed, they followed up with students, they did that whole mentoring thing, and they made sure they got into the right classes. All of that takes coordination. That is the vision. That's where we want to go. Clearly we are not there yet. But that's what we want to be able to do.

(Teacher)

"[The dual-credit program] is a matter of partnerships with UH and figuring out how they can come to us. We want to look at what other schools have done and replicate that through trial and error. It's exciting and at the infancy stage, but we're going to make it happen."

(Vice Principal)

We have had cuts, cuts, cuts...It's about regaining those positions, so it's not one counselor taking care of all the students' needs and a college and career readiness program...We are a small school trying to provide a comprehensive high school program.

(Principal)

Passing COMPASS

Passing the COMPASS test did not emerge as a significant issue for traditional Running Start, perhaps because only a select group of students, typically the top students in the school, joined this program. But the new dual-credit models expanded enrollment to larger groups of students and, at some schools, targeted the "middle range" or "gap" students who included students in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, students who scored in an average score range on the ACT PLAN assessment, or students with at least a C average.

School staff members anticipated that many of the students they were targeting for the new dual-credit program would not have the necessary skills to pass the COMPASS. As a result, schools adopted two key strategies. One was providing COMPASS test prep. Leilehua HS developed a two-year program so that juniors could spend the year preparing for the placement exam; they then take the college courses in their senior year. Moloka'i HS also provided students with COMPASS test prep, and Konawaena HS was working with Hawai'i Community College to provide students with a math boot camp over the summer to prepare for the COMPASS math exam.

Yet, even at schools that offered COMPASS test prep, some students who applied for the dual-credit program still did not pass the COMPASS exam and thus could not take the college course. Some school staff members felt that these students still benefited from the test prep and application process experience. But a few students who had friends who did not pass COMPASS worried that the experience of "not getting into UH" because they did not pass COMPASS discouraged these students, and made them feel like they would not be able to get into college at all or were not college material.

The second strategy to address the challenge of passing COMPASS was offering courses that did not require taking the COMPASS at all. Keaau HS adopted this strategy by offering Hawaiian Studies; Kohala HS adopted this strategy by offering Sociology; and the first course Leilehua HS offers through iReady (ICS 101) does not require COMPASS. At Leilehua HS, this also gives students who fail the COMPASS the first time around a little more time to pass before they take English 100 in the second semester of their senior year. All schools were considering offering UH courses that did not require COMPASS scores. This strategy expands access to college courses to a much broader range of students who typically may not consider taking college courses.

Finding College Instructors

Another barrier to the new dual-credit models was finding college instructors who were willing to travel, often long distances, to the high school to teach a classroom of high school students. We observed two strategies the schools had adopted, or were considering, to deal with the challenge: one is to offer college level courses online, and the other is using certified high school teachers to deliver college-level courses.

Finding college instructors is not a challenge for Leilehua HS because they employ the first strategy—offering online courses. They do not expect their college instructors to come to the high school campus, although thus far, the students have met their instructor face-to-face when they visited LCC or their instructor came to the high school campus to meet the students. One other school was considering the online model since their high school is extremely far from the nearest college campus.

A second strategy—using certified high school teachers to teach dual credit—is the one Keaau HS is using, and two other schools are considering it. This approach works well at Keaau

because the teacher is already a lecturer at the local community college, and thus knows how to provide students with an authentic college course. The course has a traditional course syllabus and the same expectations as a college course. Other schools also mentioned having teachers on staff who were adjunct faculty at the local community college and thus would be a good fit for delivering a dual-credit course that had the same elements or “feel” as a college course.

Facilitators

In examining the new models of dual-credit programs, we found developing networks of support and building community of learners were promising strategies to expand these program and share successes as well as challenges in implementing such programs.

Networks of Support

A key facilitator of the high school-based dual-credit programs is a broad range of supports for individuals running the program and for students participating in the program. The partner colleges supported the high schools in the following ways:

- College student services staff members provided high school counselors and administrators an orientation on how to start offering college credit courses at the high school, the UH application process, and the types of college courses available. (Mentioned by three schools)
- College staff found college instructors willing to travel to the high school (except Leilehua) and teach a classroom of high school students. (All five schools)
- College math instructor provided students with COMPASS test prep. (One school)
- Student services staff members facilitated college campus visits for students. (One school)
- College instructor maintained contact with the high school instructor to communicate about student progress. (Two schools)

Support from the partner college was critical to the implementation of the program. Moving forward, high schools hoped that college staff would recognize the value of the dual-credit programs and grow their support through continuing to provide high-quality college instructors and offer COMPASS test prep and college visits to students.

Across the schools, we also observed a focus on building a network of support for student participants that focused not only on college academic skills but the non-academic skills necessary for college success. All high schools organized family nights to inform families about the availability of dual-credit course, UH application requirements, the expectations of a college course, and the type of support their student would need if they took a college course. Supports for students in the college course focused on help with college assignments, as well as building self-advocacy, time management, learning strategies, and study skills.

Communities of Learning

The dual-credit programs also benefited from structures that supported learning across the schools. Staff members at the two schools with ECHS programs, Kohala and Moloka'i, attended periodic meetings with staff members from the other ECHS high schools and their partner colleges. These meetings are facilitated by an expert consultant and are an opportunity to share best practices, barriers, and solutions to common challenges. Staff members who had participated in these meetings said they helped provide a foundation for their program and build relationships with their partner college.

Two schools that were not ECHS grantees also spoke about learning from other schools through meetings organized by the superintendent for their complex area. Representatives from the colleges attend the meetings as well, so all high schools hear the same information and all programs, whether ECHS or high-school based Running Start, will be implemented in the same way. A teacher noted that "At the complex area, the [dual-credit] initiatives are pushed collectively and collaboratively, so everyone isn't doing their own thing."

Summary

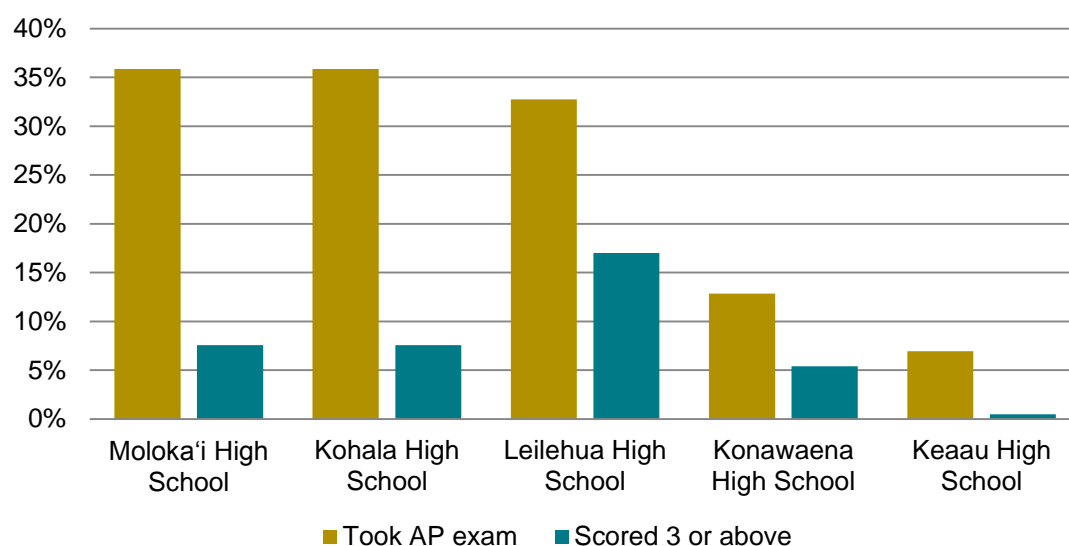
Similar to the students in traditional Running Start, students participating in the high-school-based models unanimously described positive experiences with taking college courses at high school. They spoke about learning rigorous course content and improving their time management and study skills in order to keep up with the numerous assignments and assessments. To expand the experience of taking college courses at high school to a broader range of students, schools can employ a number of strategies, such as providing COMPASS test prep or offering courses that do not require COMPASS. Most importantly, schools benefit from a network of support and community of learners that ensure that counselors and instructors who run the program are supported and the program is sustainable over the long-term.

Building a System of Courses and Programming That Supports College Readiness

A key theme that emerged across our schools is how traditional Running Start, the new dual-credit model, AP, AVID, and other college prep programs are connected to each other. Across the schools, staff sought to build a continuum of college readiness supports for students. They tended to establish this continuum in similar ways: All schools had an AVID program for students in grade 9, 10 and/or 11, and schools recruited AVID students for their new dual-credit program. School staff members viewed the new dual-credit program as an opportunity for their “B/C students,” also called “gap students,” to engage with rigorous college coursework and earn college credit. We spoke with the AVID instructors at each of the five schools: They used the AVID program as an opportunity to not only prepare students for college, but also talk to them about the benefits of dual credit, discuss the application requirements of the dual-credit program, and encourage them to apply.

AP was also on this continuum because, at all schools, most AP courses were open enrollment and advertised to AVID students as well. The key difference between AP and the new dual-credit course was that only a small proportion of students passed the AP exam, and, by doing so, earned college credit (Figure 3). On the other hand, school staff members believed that with the proper supports in place, nearly all students who took the new dual-credit courses would pass, and thus earn college credit.

Figure 3
Percentage of Students in the 2013 Graduating Class Who Took at Least One AP Exam and Scored “3” or Above in High School



Source: College and Career Readiness Indicator Reports: <http://www.p20hawaii.org/resources/college-and-career-readiness-indicators-reports/2013-ccri-data/>

Perhaps the only program that did not fit into this continuum was traditional Running Start. All the schools viewed traditional Running Start as most ideal for their top students because of the academic hurdles of passing COMPASS and taking a college course on their own, and logistical hurdles of taking a college course on a college campus. However, school staff members still viewed traditional Running Start as perhaps a more feasible way of earning college credit than AP, and, at Moloka'i HS specifically, more students have earned college credit through passing their traditional Running Start course than from the AP exam.

Finally, all dual-credit participants we spoke with also took AP, providing a lens into differences and similarities, and advantages and disadvantages, of the different programs from their perspective. We describe these in Table 4.

Table 4
Features of Different Models of Earning College Credit as Described by Students

	Traditional Running Start	High-School-Based Dual Credit	Advanced Placement
College knowledge	College instructor, course curriculum, peers and campus provide some idea about college rigor, expectations, and environment	College instructor and course curriculum provide some idea about college rigor and expectations	Course curriculum provides some idea about college rigor and expectations
Peers	Fairly homogenous by ability, but heterogeneous by age and background	All high school students, but ability levels homogenous	All high school students, but ability levels more heterogeneous (due to larger/open enrollments)
Instructor	Generally positive opinions about college instructors; instructor more organized, focused on teaching	Generally positive opinions about college instructors; instructor more organized, focused on teaching	Mixed opinions about HS teachers; more focused on discipline/classroom management
Curriculum	More assignments and projects, less test prep	More assignments and projects, less test prep	More test prep to prepare for AP exam
Cost	Expensive (about \$300/community college course and \$900/university course); Free if FRPL or Native Hawaiian	Free for all students	Somewhat costly; costs limited to test (\$91 for students; \$15 for FRPL students)
Course options	Variety of options	Very limited	Variety of options
Support to students	No formal support; student-driven program	Varies by school	Varies by teacher
College credit	Guaranteed if pass course	Guaranteed if pass course	Must pass AP exam

Conclusions and Recommendations

To conclude, the five schools demonstrated a similar commitment to offering students options for earning college credit and implementing new dual-credit programs. They faced similar challenges in expanding access to dual credit through traditional Running Start, so they were all implementing new dual-credit programs. These new dual-credit programs offered college courses to a classroom of students on the high school campus during regular school hours. Schools typically targeted their gap students for these new programs. They relied on their college partners for help with building these programs and external funding sources, primarily GEAR UP, to cover tuition and fees. They also sought to build support among their students' families for these programs, and provide academic and non-academic support to student participants.

To sustain and grow these programs, we offer the following recommendations and lessons learned to policymakers, superintendents and principals, and students.

Policymakers and District Leaders

High school-based dual-credit programs allow schools to expand access to college courses to more high school students, but they are difficult to sustain because they are resource-intensive. The main recommendation to policymakers and district leaders is that to truly prioritize these programs, schools need additional funding.

At a minimum, schools need additional resources for two essential staff members:

- A counselor or another staff person who can give up some duties and have time allocated to manage tasks related to student recruitment, parent outreach, COMPASS test prep, support with the application process, and general mentoring of high school students taking college courses.
- A part-time teacher to cover the college class and provide academic support when the college instructor is not there. If the school has more than one college course and the courses do not overlap, this part-time teacher can cover all courses. One school principal estimated that a part-time teacher that comes to the school 17 hours a week costs about \$12,000/year.

Additionally, UH courses are expensive; thus, covering the tuition and fees, particularly for low-income students, is critical for maintaining equitable access to college courses for high school students. Currently, GEAR UP, Project Ho'oku'i, and the Castle Foundation cover tuition and fees for low-income students and schools, Native Hawaiian students, and ECHS grantees. While a relatively stable source of funding, relying on grants to maintain dual-credit programs in a state may not be the most sustainable strategy. Long-term solutions may include state-

funded subsidies to lower the cost of UH tuition and fees to high school students taking college courses.

School Administrators

Taking Courses on College Campus

Traditional Running Start is a valuable program, but has few participants at most of the schools we visited. To expand enrollment, we offer three suggestions:

- Provide all students with more information about this opportunity, and let them decide if it's feasible or not to participate. Staff members suggested that information should be provided schoolwide so that teachers and staff members are aware of it as well, and dual-credit opportunities are described to students in their 10th-grade advisory period.
- When advertising for traditional Running Start, provide students with an orientation to the city bus, if available, so they have a viable option for getting to a college campus. Provide their families with this information as well.
- Find a staff member who is an advocate of the program that can provide support to participants. This may be the Project Ho'oku'i coordinator or teacher with a passion for the program.
- Consider offering online college courses to individual students interested in traditional Running Start in the high school-based dual-credit courses.

High School-based Dual-credit Models

High school-based dual-credit models are critical to expanding access to dual credit to a broader range of students. A primary lesson from the five high schools is that "one size does not fit all." Dual-credit programs must be designed with the school context in mind. We observed a variety of programs with different features that took into account the available resources and needs of the students and school. In designing their programs, schools had to answer the following questions:

- What types of students will be targeted for recruitment? How will we target and recruit these students?
- How will we engage families in the recruitment and application process? What kinds of information will we provide to families?
- When is the best period for college courses to be offered? What scheduling issues will the registrar have to manage?
- What types of courses should be offered? Who is available to teach the courses?
- If college instructors are not available, do we have high school instructors certified to teach dual credit?
- Should we offer a course or two that does not require COMPASS?

- If the course requires COMPASS, what kinds of test prep can we offer students?
- For courses with college instructors, how will we hire a high school instructor for the course when it is not in session? What will the role of this high school instructor be?
- How do we effectively engage with our college partner? What resources can they provide to ensure the program flourishes?
- What resources do we need to ensure the program is sustainable over the long-term?

Considering and answering these questions is the first step towards developing a high school-based dual-credit program. Overall, we recommend that schools develop a network of support for staff running these programs and students participating in them. Support can come from other school staff, college partners, families, and a community of other high schools who share best practices and strategies to overcome challenges.

Students

Again and again, we heard students enrolled in traditional Running Start and the new high school-based dual-credit programs emphasize that dual credit is for everyone, but that not enough students take advantage of it because they do not think they are smart enough. We encourage all students to become informed about their school's dual-credit program and consider the lessons learned from students in this study. Student who took dual-credit courses said:

- The most important skill for succeeding in a dual-credit course is the desire to learn and better oneself, not intelligence.
- Participating in a college course builds multiple skills and offers new experiences including: familiarity with a college curriculum and instructor, academic content knowledge in a specific subject area, development of time management and study skills, and experience advocating for oneself and asking for help.
- College courses are expensive, so become informed about different funding options. Tuition and fees should be fully covered for students who attend a Title I school with a high school-based dual-credit program and students who have free or reduced-price lunch status or are Native Hawaiian and participate in traditional Running Start.
- Some college courses require students meet ACT or COMPASS test scores to enroll. Some schools offer test prep, and some do not; but regardless, test prep is essential to the dual-credit admissions process.
- While in the college course, take advantage of tutoring and mentoring opportunities the high school may provide.

Appendix A: Interview Protocols

Interview Protocol for Teachers, Counselors, and Administrators

1. Please tell us about your current role at [X] high school and how long you have been here.
2. What kinds of dual-credit models are available for students at your school?
 - a. Running Start (Traditional: courses located at college campus)
 - b. Running Start (High School-based: courses located at high school)
 - c. Running Start (Community-based: courses located at community center)
 - d. Jump Start
 - e. Early Admit
 - f. Early College HS (ECHS)
 - g. AP
 - h. IB
 - i. Dual-credit Articulated Programs of Study (DCAPS)
 - j. Other?
3. How does Running Start compare to other programs at your school that allow students to earn college credit? Describe any similarities, differences, advantages, disadvantages.
 - a. What dual-credit model serves the largest number of students?
4. Tell us about the recruitment process for Running Start.
 - a. How does your school reach out to students about the program?
 - b. What kinds of information do they hear?
 - c. Do you target a specific type of student?
 - d. To what extent do students apply because they self-identify as interested in Running Start versus recruitment strategies?
 - e. If school has both types of Running Start: How does this differ for the traditional vs high school-based Running Start?
 - f. If school has ECHS: How does this differ for ECHS?
5. Tell us about the admissions requirements and funding for Running Start.
 - a. What are the admissions requirements for enrollment?
 - b. What funding options are available to students? (e.g., Ho'oku'i)
 - c. How do they apply and receive funding?
 - d. If school has both types of Running Start: How does this differ for the traditional vs high school-based Running Start?
 - e. If school has ECHS: How does this differ for ECHS?

6. Which students do not usually participate in Running Start? Why? Tell us about some key barriers to participation.
 - a. If school has both types of Running Start: How does this differ for the traditional vs high school-based Running Start?
 - b. If school has ECHS: How does this differ for ECHS?
7. How are these barriers being addressed?
 - a. What are some changes that could be made to reach-out to those students who are currently not engaged in Running Start?
 - b. If school has both types of Running Start: How does this differ for the traditional vs high school-based Running Start?
8. Do you think all students should have the opportunity to take Running Start?
 - a. If school has both types of Running Start: How does this differ for the traditional vs high school-based Running Start?
 - b. If school has ECHS: How does this differ for ECHS?
9. What are your measures of success for Running Start?
 - a. By demand for the program?
 - b. By the percentage who remain in the program?
 - c. By who graduates from high school?
 - d. By who transitions to college?
 - e. Based on these measures, in your view, how successful is Running Start?
 - f. If school has both types of Running Start: How does this differ for the traditional vs high school-based Running Start?
 - g. If school has ECHS: How does this differ for ECHS?
10. Would you like to add anything else?

Focus Group Protocol for Students – Participants in Running Start

1. Please tell us your name and grade.
2. Are you taking Running Start courses at a college campus or at this high school? Is anyone taking Running Start courses somewhere else, like at a community center?
 - a. Are you taking any other dual-credit/college courses? Ask about:
 - i. Jump Start
 - ii. Early Admit
 - iii. Early College
 - iv. AP
 - v. IB
 - vi. Dual-credit Articulated Programs of Study
 - vii. Other?
3. How did you learn about the opportunity to take a Running Start college course?
4. Why did you decide to take a Running Start course?
5. Would you like to take more college courses in high school?
 - a. Why or why not?
6. What are some challenges with taking college courses in high school? Probe for the following academic, financial, and logistical challenges.
 - a. Don't feel prepared, courses too hard
 - b. Cost of courses
 - c. Location of courses
 - d. Types of courses offered (not interesting, not the courses needed)
7. How do the Running Start courses compare to your other regular (non-college) courses?
 - a. How are the Running Start courses more challenging than your other courses?
 - b. How are the Running Start courses less challenging than your other courses?
 - c. For students who are taking other dual-credit/college courses, how do the Running Start courses compare to your other dual-credit/college courses?
8. What is helping you be successful in your college courses?
9. What have you learned about college from taking Running Start courses?
 - a. How has Running Start changed your plans for college?
 - b. For students who took other dual-credit/college courses, what have you learned about college from taking other dual-credit/college courses?
10. What advice do you have on how to improve Running Start?

Focus Group Protocol for Students – Non-Participants

1. Please tell us your name, grade and your favorite courses in high school right now.
2. Do you know about a program called Running Start?
 - a. What have you heard about it?
3. Running Start are college courses for high school students that award college credit. Running Start courses are offered at your high school, on a college campus, and sometimes in the community at a community center. How does Running Start sound different than the courses you are taking now?
 - a. Would you be interested in taking Running Start college course?
 - b. Where would you want to take Running Start? Your high school, college campus, or community center?
4. Are you taking any other dual-credit/college courses now?
 - i. Jump Start
 - ii. Early Admit
 - iii. Early College
 - iv. AP
 - v. IB
 - vi. Dual-credit Articulated Programs of Study
 - vii. Other?
5. [For students who are taking other dual-credit/college courses] How did you hear about the college courses you are taking? Why did you decide to take the courses?
6. [For all students] What do you think are some challenges with taking college courses in high school? Probe for the following academic, financial, and logistical challenges.
 - a. Don't feel prepared, courses too hard
 - b. Cost of courses
 - c. Location of courses
 - d. Types of courses offered (not interesting, not the courses needed)
7. What advice do you have for us on how to help more high school students like you participate in college courses? Probe for better advertising, lower cost, more classes offered, teacher/counselor support/encouragement, better academic preparation.

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