

Good Afternoon Chair and Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Dr. Erin Prince and I have the privilege of serving as Superintendent for the Corvallis School District. Thank you for hearing from us today around 5th year programs. I will keep my comments short and to the point so you can hear from our students. They are why we are here today!

Corvallis is in its second year with Running Start, our 5th year program. Our graduation rates jumped from 72% to 84% last year when our 5th year program began. This is not by chance and definitely not incremental. These rates are transformational and Running Start is the catalyst.

Two years ago at College Hill, our Corvallis Alternative High School, 0% of the seniors went on to college. Out of this year's seniors, 50% are committed to attend College through our 5th year program.

Our region's retention rate for students attending a second year of college is at 71%, well above the state's average and this does not even count the students who received their certificate in the first year and successfully went into the work force with a specific skills like Certified nursing assistant, welding and electrician.

Unlike all other college credit programs, our programs are unique in that they support our students with a bridge from high school to college, taking place on the college campus, not high school campus. This helps our students gain confidence and support as they navigate this critical transition.

Our students primarily are students of color, English Language Learners, students with disabilities and students in poverty. Many are first generation high school graduates and first generation college attenders. Is this not what 40/40/20 is asking of us? Is this not the right focus for our educational system? Absolutely!

We understand the funding model needs to look different, but do not cut or phase out the programs.

Let's collaborate in creating a model that uses the best of what is working with the potential for scalability and sustainability.

Please kill this bill before it eliminates the dreams, opportunities and hope for a

bright and successful future for our kids.

Thank you for your time. We are committed to each and every student and not in widening the gap of the "haves and have nots".

# **Fifth Year Programs**

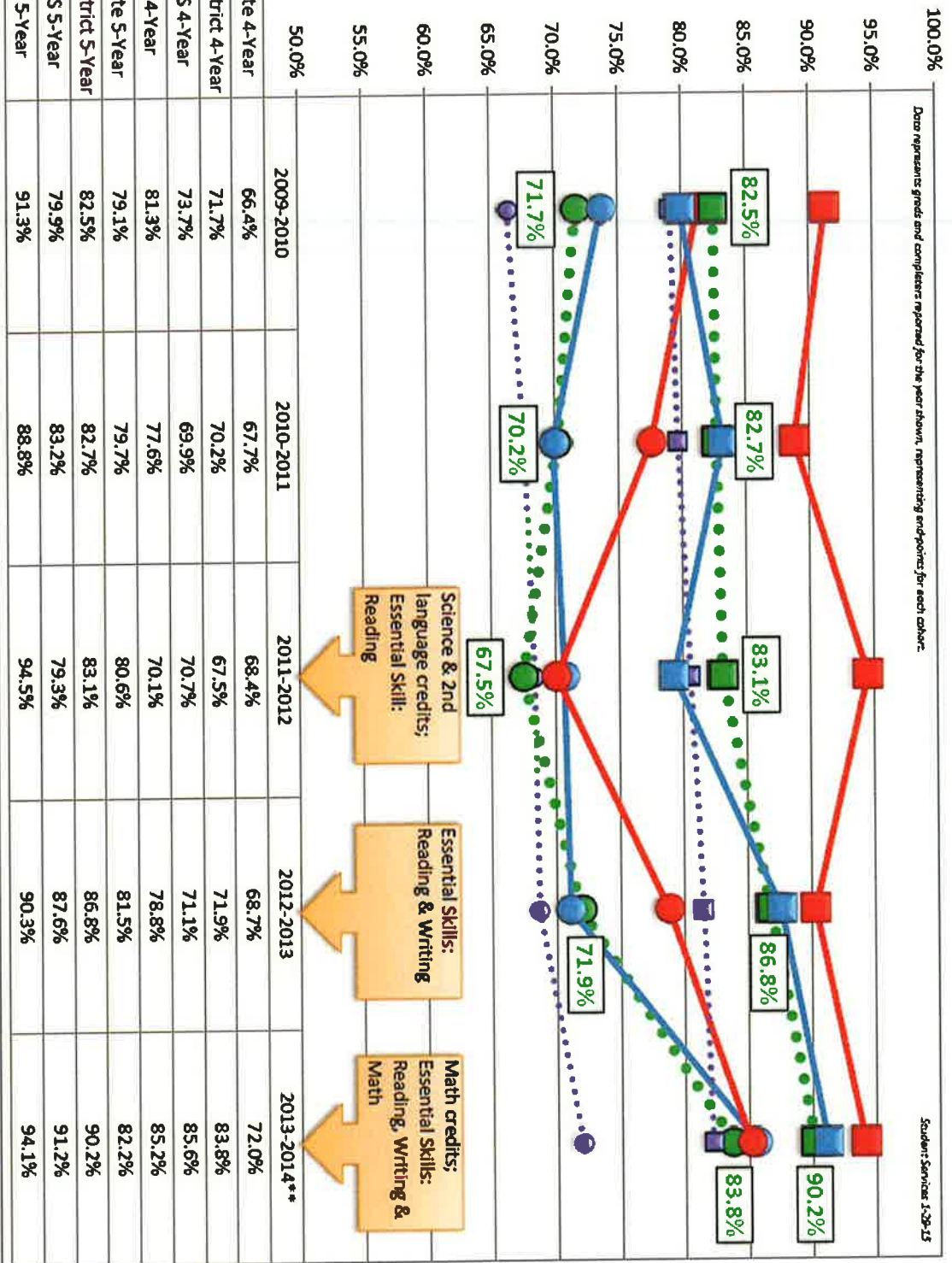
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- 1. Corvallis School District Graduation Rates**
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- 3. Running Start Written Testimonials\***

\*View the YouTube video of the student's giving their testimonials at:  
<http://youtu.be/R4R6C0g-Apk>

# 4-year Cohort, 5-year Completers



"Old" calculation method



CV: 83.2%  
CHS: 82.0%  
Dist: 81.0%

State: 70.1%

\*\* Beginning in 2013-14, grad cohort calculations incorporate modified diplomas and diplomas earned but not yet awarded ("Running Start")

Population: Albany = 51K, Corvallis = 55K (includes OSU population), Lebanon = 16K, Sweet Home 9K

## **A. Persistence rate year 1 to year 2**

(data from REL Education presentation, Nov. 2014, not yet published and LBCC)

### **Over all persistence**

Rural = 58%

Nonrural = 68%

5<sup>th</sup> Year program at LBCC = 71%

### **Persistence to year 2 of students who enroll in college immediately after high school**

Rural = 66%

Nonrural = 75%

5<sup>th</sup> Year program at LBCC = 71%

### **Persistence to year 2 of students who delayed college enrollment after high school**

Rural = 37%

Nonrural = 45%

COMMENT: It's important to get students in college right away. Delaying their enrollment decreases their chances of completing. The students who enroll in college right out of high school have a higher persistence rate than those who delay.

## **B. College Going Rate**

According to REL Northwest, rural students go to college in fewer numbers

I sent them an email asking for the numbers. This is what I got off a website from The Oregonian. I'm not sure where the data comes from. I think the data from Lebanon and Sweet Home may be a problem since the 5<sup>th</sup> year program impacts the graduation and matching "enrolled in college" numbers.

2011:

Portland schools 70% (<http://schools.oregonlive.com/district/portland/>)

Albany 59% (<http://schools.oregonlive.com/district/albany/>)

Lebanon 44.6% (<http://schools.oregonlive.com/district/Lebanon-Community/>)

Sweet Home – 53.6% (<http://schools.oregonlive.com/district/Sweet-Home/>)

Corvallis's college going numbers are very high, 77%, but OSU is an extenuating circumstance. You have the numbers about how the 5<sup>th</sup> year students help your underserved populations get to college.

<http://schools.oregonlive.com/district/corvallis/>

## **C. Success at LBCC (college data)**

### **Average credits attempted and earned**

All 5<sup>th</sup> year students = 48.7 attempted and 43.6 earned – successful completion = 90%

2013 HS grads = 37.6 attempted and 33.2 earned – successful completion = 88%

### **Fall to Spring retention**

5<sup>th</sup> year students = 71%

2013 HS grads = 66%

## Comments from Running Start Coordinator- Eric Wright

If we are serious about increasing the number of our kids enrolling in college, we must provide new pathways. With the Running Start program, the pathway is created AND support is provided for the best possible outcome. For those students who are first to college in their family, simply navigating the registration process is uncharted territory. Running Start guides them through that process. We require students to create an academic plan, rather than dabbling in various subjects; we require the use of the support tools like the tutoring center and advising; and we require a quarterly check-in with a counselor at College Hill. Running Start students must take Math 111 and Writing 121- the most 'failed' courses in the Oregon University System. A passing grade in these courses is a strong predictor of a student's ability to stay the course in college.

The fear of debt is a real factor in the decision to attend college. Many of our students are not sure of the college path and are unsure of their ability to succeed, so they simply don't venture on to the path. By extending high school another year, these students build the skills within a structured program and have a better chance of success in college beyond the fifth year.

Historically, College Hill students are at the highest risk of dropping out, let alone envisioning that they are capable of a success in college. More than half of these students are economically disadvantaged and the first in their family to attend college. This year, with the Running Start option, the majority of our 56 seniors are planning to attend college. A remarkable figure!

*We spoke to three Running Start students about their educational journey. Each story is different and makes a compelling case for the importance of the advanced diploma pathway.*

**Cristina** learned about the Running Start program through her Individualized Education Program (IEP). She was struggling in high school and at risk of dropping out. In May of her senior year, she enrolled in Running Start. She didn't want to go to LBCC but it was too much money for her family for her to go elsewhere and her academics were not strong. She shared that family finances were tight. The family sometimes didn't have lights or an internet connection at home ...but they always made it through. She praised her parents for their encouragement to enroll in Running Start and while she felt pressure and some stress about starting college she loved the independence that she eventually experienced. She will complete the program this June with an Advanced Diploma and 36 credits, earning all As and a B+. She plans to get a full time job to save money to continue college. Her first hope was culinary school but she is reevaluating her options. According to Cristina "As a senior, you don't know how to start, this is a crossroad in life. Running Start gives you a chance to have a taste of college life with support. **There is a big difference between independence and being totally on your own.**"

**Courtney** has attended 509J schools from kindergarten through high school. She was on a 504 plan due to a learning disability and enrolled in remedial classes in high school. Neither of her parents attended college and she couldn't envision how she could ever make her way onto that path. If not for Running Start, she would have taken the year after high school to work and she

has doubts that college was in her future. Her Running Start coursework started with Math 65 and Writing 90 and she made it through Math 111 and Writing 121. She received her advanced diploma in June 2014 and is continuing at LBCC this year with the vision of becoming a child therapist. Next fall she plans to transfer to Western Oregon University with graduate school on her horizon. According to Courtney, **“I don’t know where I would be without Running Start. I’d still be trying to figure out how to pay for college.** I have had great teachers and my parents are really supportive. My advice to seniors is to go to college. You get the classes that you need and you will figure out what you want to do.”

**Diego** made a decision to jump at the Running Start option after an assembly during his senior year. As **the first in his family to graduate from high school, a college pathway was not an assumed pathway. Running Start broke down the barriers** and Diego exudes an enthusiasm for learning and reaching his full potential that is contagious. He quickly moved through the required coursework and began to focus on accounting, writing, and computer science classes. He took an accounting class and was surprised to find that he liked it. Diego shared that he knows he’s an example for his younger siblings, and hopes Running Start will be available for his seven year old brother, currently enrolled in Corvallis public schools. He will complete his advanced diploma this June and has applied for an accounting clerk certificate. Without Running Start, Diego would have likely delayed his launch into college and spent more hours balancing a full-job and a class load. He plans to continue in college, attending classes and working part-time.

**Running Start is a powerful navigation tool for 21<sup>st</sup> century students who don’t have a roadmap for their future beyond high school.** The support and structure provided by College Hill staff gives students guidance for success while requiring that students take their future into their own hands. A majority of students taking advantage of the advanced diploma option would simply not take a step on the college pathway without this option.