

To: Executive Staff  
From: Strategic Planning Council  
Date: November 29, 2017  
Subject: Running Start Department Review

Commendations:

- FVCC's Running Start program opens the door to college for many first-generation students, as well as providing high achieving high school students an affordable start to their college careers. This directly aligns with FVCC's Strategic Plan Goal of increasing access to education.
- The program has grown steadily over the past 10+ years, with a 113% increase in enrollment from Spring 2013 to Spring 2017.
- Advising services provided to Running Start students have increased the quality of FVCC's program.
- Workshops for high school teachers have expanded the Concurrent Enrollment offerings in Welding, which is now offered at 12 different high schools. Preparations are currently underway for an EDU 101 workshop for high school teachers to make this course available as Concurrent Enrollment.
- Running Start staff consistently participate in professional development activities.
  - Both positions carry a great deal of responsibility, including serving as academic and career advisors, requiring knowledge and skills on par with professional advisors on the main campus.

Recommendations:

- Re-evaluate the placement of the existing Running Start positions, and consider adding a position to provide more contact hours in the high schools.
  - With the expansion of the program, there has been a decrease from three employees with office hours in the six local high schools, down to just one employee currently spread among the six schools.
  - A consistent presence in the high schools is critical for relationship building and marketing of the program.
  - One additional Running Start position would allow for expansion of the program, while maintaining its high quality.
  - High turnover has created obstacles for the Program Specialist, High School Relations position. After a long-term vacancy, it is difficult to regain relationships with teachers and counselors who send students for advising.
  - The existing Running Start positions should be on par with similar positions on campus. Moving the Program Specialist to a salaried professional staff position would go a long way in reducing turnover, allowing for a more stable presence in the high schools and more consistent growth of the program.
- Work to streamline the admissions and registration process for Running Start students. A new Student Information System would help in this regard. In the meantime:
  - Develop fillable enrollment forms.
  - Research options for secure e-signatures on the Running Start enrollment paperwork.
  - Work to decrease the turn-around time for placement test results. Consider creating an alternative placement for Running Start students.