Running Start—A program in Washington state which began in 1993, allowing students who were able to successfully pass community college entrance exams to begin taking introductory college courses tuition free, thereby earning up to two years of college credit while still enrolled as high school students.

Dual Enrollment—Students enrolled in high school and college simultaneously. Frequently, the student’s home district subsidizes the college tuition cost while students earn both high school and college credit.

Running Start vs. Bright Future—RS students tend to use their acquired college credit as a means to move on to the traditional 4-year university. Bright Future students tend to use their dual enrollment as a means to earn a certificate, licensure, or AA degree in order to move into a specific vocational field or career.

Common Core—(officially Common Core State Standards or CCSS, though often referred to as Common Core or the “Core”). A set of K-12 standards that defines the knowledge and skills students require to successfully navigate academic standards at each grade level, ostensibly allowing them to be prepared for the next grade, college, and work. Not a curriculum, per se, but a comprehensive list of standards that students are expected to master. The alignment of standards is intended to create a national level of student mastery, and allow students to perform better on international academic tests.

Wraparound support/Case Management—Bright Future students receive personalized guidance, scheduling, school/career counseling, and mentorship guided by the principle that personal relationships are an investment in student success. Bright Future students are carefully monitored, counseled, guided, and supported from their entrance in the program, throughout their training and coursework, and into job/career placement. This holistic, wraparound support system allows for great student success.

ELL—English Language Learner. An ELL student is one who is learning or developing English language skills (non-native speakers). ELD refers to English Language Development, which describes the academic programs that aim to assist ELL students whose primary language is not English. Though Spanish is the language most commonly spoken by ELL students, there are over 200 languages represented in Washington State ELD programs. Washington state is among 12 states with the highest ELL student enrollment (WA State Superintendent Report to Legislature, 2013).

CTE—Career and Technical Education. CTE programs provide students with the necessary academic, technical, training, and professional skills to succeed in future careers, introducing them to the world of work while still in high school.