

Russ,

I generally love your Philosophy Notes, but this particular post does not have the nuance and attention to detail that you usually bring.

Most notably, your post completely skips over policymakers' primary rationale for promoting College in the High School (CHS) programs: the fact that CHS markedly improves college attendance and graduation rates, especially for low-income students, students of color, and first-generation students. (The [American Institutes for Research](#), the [College in the High School Alliance](#), and [NACEP](#) all have excellent research libraries on this topic.) You are certainly correct that policymakers are interested in the ability of programs like CHS to save families, and especially taxpayers, money. However, it is highly unlikely that our state and many others would be pursuing this approach if there were not also a mountain of evidence that CHS increases overall college attendance rates. ([A recent study found that students who participated in such programs were a whopping 19% more likely to attend a community college than comparable students who did not.](#)) I see the impact of Bellevue College in the High School with my own eyes all the time: the program broadens horizons and opens doors, and the students who benefit most are those who are on the fence about what they will do after high school.

For what it's worth, I agree that it would be extremely challenging to do College in the High School in Philosophy. But this is because of the mismatch between teacher training programs and the grounding in disciplinary approaches found in academic graduate Philosophy programs, not due to the inherent inability of high school instructors to get students to engage in college-level inquiry. In other disciplines, notably Mathematics, English Language Arts, and World Languages, the mismatch is not so pronounced and alignment is more manageable. Our faculty coordinators for Bellevue College in the High School work hard to ensure that this alignment occurs. The BC faculty members engaged in this work can tell you that there is outstanding teaching and learning happening in the classes that we share with our high school partners. BC faculty have been working with high school partners in the Bellevue College in the High School program for over 30 years, and we've built robust partnerships and strong alignments. We simply do not have large numbers of Bellevue College in the High School students who are being shortchanged on a college education.

Colleges and universities currently award credit for programs that have far less rigor, no equity impacts, and zero college-to-high-school collaboration. The [College Board's extremely broken Advanced Placement \(AP\) program](#) comes to mind. You have, perhaps, trained your fire on the wrong dual-credit model; programs like AP do indeed shortchange students. Running Start, on the other hand, is a fantastic dual-credit program, but it is often challenging for students who work, students who need to take care of younger siblings, and students don't own cars and attend high schools that are poorly served by transit. For these students, Bellevue College in the High School is an excellent option.

If you'd like to get beyond appearances, I encourage you to come out and chat with our Bellevue College in the High School students, instructors, and our awesome BC faculty coordinators who do great work in this program every single day.

Take good care,
Michael Reese

PS: Thank you for doing these Philosophy Notes. I love seeing them pop up in my inbox.