

Calculating Class Rank and GPA

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee
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Context and the Problem:

- North Carolina Statute G.S. 116-11 (10a) states that “the grade point average and class rank shall be calculated by a standard method to be devised by institutions of higher education.”
- The current procedure has been in place since 1995-96 and weights AP and IB courses with 6 quality points, honors and other college courses with 5 quality points, and standard courses with 4.
- In practice what does this mean?

Example 1

Jane and John are enrolled in the same classes except Jane has decided to take band as an additional elective. She is being recruited for a band scholarship and wants to improve her chances by enrolling in band every semester to hone her skills. Because band is only worth 4 quality points, her possible maximum GPA is less than John's. If both students made A's in all of their courses, Jane's GPA would be lower.

Jane Doe Sample Schedule	John Doe Sample Schedule
AP Course--6 quality points	AP Course 6--quality points
AP Course --6 quality points	AP Course 6--quality points
AP Course--6 quality points	AP Course 6--quality points
Honors Course-- 5 quality points	Honors Course 5 quality points
Band—4 quality points	
GPA calculation: $27/5=5.4$	GPA Calculation: $23/4=5.75$

Example 2

- A high school student takes an AP/IB course and earns a D. This student's high school GPA reflects B level performance.
- An early college high school student takes a college course and earns a D. This student's high school GPA reflects C level performance.

Three Major Concerns

(Expressed by Students, Parents, and Others)

- Makes little sense to give more quality points to AP/IB courses which seek to emulate college-level work than to actual college courses.
- Current weighting system discourages students from sampling more broadly across the curriculum, particularly in areas like band or art where honor's sections or AP courses are not typically available.
- Grade inflation.

What Have We Done?

- Appointed a working group of community college and university admissions experts, including DPI representatives.
- Group consulted with key stakeholder groups and reviewed practices of other states.
- Submitted report and recommendations to Dr. Morrissey and I in November.
- Report currently circulating to all constituents, with feedback due **January 24**.
- In general, working group has two major recommendations:
 - 1) weight AP/IB/other college courses the equally, and
 - 2) reduce the weights to bring more in line with practices in other states

Next Steps

- Review Feedback from Campuses
- The Three Governing Boards will Consider the Recommendations in Spring 2014.
- Following consideration of these recommendation and agreement on how to proceed,
 - The Department of Public Instruction will present necessary policy changes to the State Board of Education for its approval
 - The State Board of Education will determine a specific implementation date so as to assure current high school students are not negatively impacted by the changes