

CHS Proposed Policy Changes

GPA Calculations Change Proposal

Definitions: Grade Point Averages (GPAs) are calculated based on three numbers: the earned grade, the number of credits, and the level of the course. There are two types of GPA calculations: Weighted and Un-weighted. Weighted GPA – Only leveled courses taken at Canton High School are presently included in the calculation of a weighted GPA. There are no proposed changes to this methodology. Un-weighted GPA – Like weighted GPA, un-weighted GPA presently only includes grades earned in leveled courses. To better represent overall achievement and to better align with the widely used standard for calculation of un-weighted GPA, *we propose to include all graded courses in the un-weighted GPA, including un-leveled elective courses.* Pass/Fail courses would not be included in this calculation. The un-weighted GPA is not reported to colleges, and at present, the sole function of un-weighted GPA is to determine eligibility for Century Club.

Rationale Computation of Weighted GPA

In a concrete sense, we know that 24% of all college applications from CHS are sent to Massachusetts public colleges and universities and that 42% of all college matriculations are at Massachusetts public colleges and universities. To that end, it is valuable to examine how the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (MDHE) mandates that state colleges and universities evaluate high school transcripts and calculate GPA. Below is a comparison of the Canton High School system and the MDHE system.

Current Canton High School Grade Weight Table

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	AP/Honors	CP1	CP2
A+	97-100	4.30	3.71	3.13
A	93-96	4.10	3.52	2.93
A-	90-92	3.91	3.32	2.74
B+	87-89	3.71	3.13	2.54
B	83-86	3.52	2.93	2.35
B-	80-82	3.32	2.74	2.15
C+	77-79	3.13	2.54	1.95
C	73-76	2.93	2.35	1.76
C-	70-72	2.74	2.15	1.56
D+	67-69	2.54	1.95	1.37
D	63-66	2.35	1.76	1.17
D-	60-62	2.15	1.56	0.98
E	59 and below	0	0	0

**Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (MDHE)
Grade Weight Table**

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	AP	Honors	CP1	CP2
A	93-100	5.00	4.50	4.00	4.00
A-	90-92	4.67	4.17	3.67	3.67
B+	87-89	4.33	3.83	3.33	3.33
B	83-86	4.00	3.50	3.00	3.00
B-	80-82	3.67	3.17	2.67	2.67
C+	77-79	3.33	2.83	2.33	2.33
C	73-76	3.00	2.50	2.00	2.00
C-	70-72	2.67	2.17	1.67	1.67
D+	67-69	2.33	1.83	1.33	1.33
D	63-66	2.00	1.50	1.00	1.00
D-	60-62	1.67	1.17	0.67	0.67
F	59 and below	0	0	0	0

Transcripts sent to Mass. State colleges from CHS are recalculated based on the MDHE Grade Weight Table. The challenge lay in the interpretation by students and parents of the CHS GPA.

As can be seen in the CHS Table, a student enrolled in all CP2 classes earning an A in every course for their first 3 years would have 2.93 as their weighted GPA.

In order to enroll in a Mass. State college, students must have a GPA of 3.00. *While state colleges would recalculate the GPA for this same student to a 4.00, there is a chance that a student would not even apply to a state college, believing that they are below the cut-off.*

While counselors explain this discrepancy to students and parents, recalculation of student GPA's to align with the MDHE weight table, in addition to that of the CHS weight table is confusing and labor intensive. **Instead, this is a proposal to better align the CHS weight distributions with that of the MDHE.**

In sum, MDHE differentiates between AP and Honors levels while CHS does not and MDHE does not differentiate between CP1 and CP2 while CHS does. In addition:

- MDHE assigns 1 full grade equivalents above baseline for AP courses, CHS assigns 2 full grade equivalents above baseline for AP courses
- MDHE assigns 0.5 grade equivalents above baseline for Honors courses, CHS assigns 2 full grade equivalents above baseline for Honors courses
- MDHE does not assign any added value for CP1 courses, CHS assigns one full grade equivalent above baseline for CP1 courses
- MDHE does not recognize grades of A+. They are weighed the same as an A in their calculations.

Proposal:

1. Split AP and Honors course weights to different categories
2. Use CP1 as the baseline calculation (e.g. 4.00=A, 3.00=B, etc.)

3. Adjust the weights of CP1, Honors, and AP courses to align with the MDHE Grade Weight Table
4. Eliminate the current method of calculation and replace it with a simpler method using the Proposed Grade Weight Table:

$$\text{Weighted GPA} = (\text{Sum of Weighted Grade} \times \text{Credits for each course}) / \text{Total Credits}$$

5. Use all graded courses in the calculation of the un-weighted GPA.

Proposed CHS Grade Weight Table

	AP/Acc.	Hon.	CP1	CP2
A+	5.33	4.83	4.33	4.00
A	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.67
A-	4.67	4.17	3.67	3.33
B+	4.33	3.83	3.33	3.00
B	4.00	3.50	3.00	2.67
B-	3.67	3.17	2.67	2.33
C+	3.33	2.83	2.33	2.00
C	3.00	2.50	2.00	1.67
C-	2.67	2.17	1.67	1.33
D+	2.33	1.83	1.33	1.00
D	2.00	1.50	1.00	0.67
D-	1.67	1.17	0.67	0.33
E	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

GPA Calculation Example using new Weight Table

Course	Level	Credits	Grade	Weight	Weighted Points
English	AP	6	C+	3.33	3.33x6=19.98
History	Honors	6	B	3.50	3.5x6=21
Algebra 2	Honors	6	D-	1.17	1.17x6=7.02
Science	CP2	6	B+	3.00	3.00x6=18.00
Spanish	CP1	6	A-	3.67	3.67x6=22.02
Art I	Unleveled	(6)	A	N/I	N/I
		30 Credits			88.02 Points

Weighted GPA = 88.02/30 = **2.93**

Currently at CHS (in student handbook) (using the same data as above)

CLASS RANKING CALCULATIONS

The following numerical equivalents are assigned to grades in courses used in calculating the class rank.

Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Grade	Numerical Equivalent
A+	16	C+	10
A	15	C	9
A-	14	C-	8
B+	13	D+	7
B	12	D	6
B-	11	D-	5
		E	0

Weight factors are assigned to each level. The appropriate factor (below) is added to the numerical equivalents for each grade:

Level	Factor
I - AP/Honors	6
II - College Prep 1	3
III – College Prep 2	0
Electives	Not Included (N/I)

Example:

A grade of C+ in a CP1 course has a numerical equivalent of 10 and an added value of 3.

Therefore, the weighted value of the grade is 13. Next, the weighted grade is multiplied by the number of credits for the course.

This is a sample calculation of class rank based on a student's final report card.

Course	Level	Credits	Grade	Num. Equiv.	Added Value	Weighted Points
English	AP	6	C+	10	6	16x6=96
History	Honors	6	B	12	6	18x6=108
Algebra 2	Honors	6	D-	5	6	11x6=66
Science	CP2	6	B+	13	0	13x6=78
Spanish	CP1	6	A-	14	3	17x6=102
Art I	Unleveled	(6)	A	N/I	N/I	N/I

Total weighted credits = **30**

Total weighted points = **450**

Next, the total weighted points (**450**) are divided by the total number of credits in

weighted courses (**30**) to calculate a weighted average **450/30 = (15.00)**.

CHS uses a **4.3** scale to determine Grade Point Average. The GPA is calculated by dividing the weighted average by 22 (the highest possible weight factor) and then multiplying by 4.3. Therefore, for a weighted average of **15.00**, the GPA is

$$\mathbf{15.00/22 \times 4.3}$$
$$\mathbf{= 2.93}$$

Proposal to Eliminate Rank in Class

Current Practice:

Presently, Canton High School provides students with a class rank based upon their weighted GPA. Class rank is updated at the conclusion of each semester, and the rank at the end of seven semesters is reported to colleges on the high school transcript and on the Secondary School Report form of college applications.

Proposal:

With exception of valedictorian and salutatorian, we propose that in lieu of class rank, each student's weighted GPA be reported along with a 'histrogram' representing the GPA distribution of the entire graduating class.

Rationale:

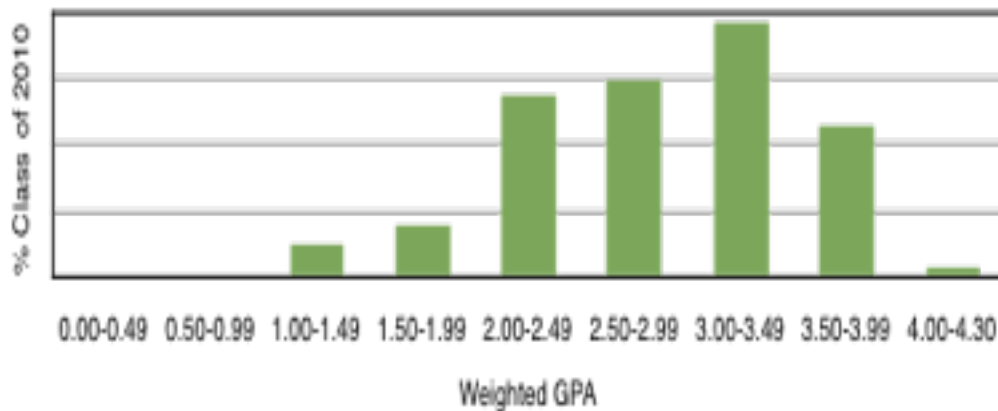
In 2007, the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC) released a comprehensive study of the use of rank in class in college admissions. At that time, only 23% of colleges reported that class rank was of "considerable importance" in their admissions decisions. This number has consistently trended downward for the past fifteen years.

Anecdotally, college admissions representatives who have visited Canton High School this fall have been consulted to gauge their opinion of schools reporting class rank. They consistently reported that class rank helps only a limited number of students at the very top of the class, and that it may hurt the candidacy of those students not ranking at the very top of the class. On the flip side, the consensus was that such a significant number of high schools do not report class rank, that not reporting rank does not hurt a student's application status.

After careful study, the CHS Guidance department believes that the student body would be better served if class rank were eliminated in favor of an alternative reporting measure. Specifically, in lieu of class rank, each student’s weighted GPA is reported along with a ‘histogram’ representing the GPA distribution of the entire graduating class. This histogram would indicate the number of students in the class, the highest weighted GPA, the mean weighted GPA, and the median weighted GPA. This new model would be in line with many other schools that have transitioned from a traditional class rank (see below). Valedictorian and Salutatorian would still be determined by using the top two weighted GPA’s at the end of seven semesters.

CLASS OF 2010 GPA DISTRIBUTION

n=205 highest GPA=4.18 mean GPA=2.85 median GPA=2.93



Area Schools that *Do* and *Do Not* Report Rank in Class to Colleges

Schools reporting class rank	Schools <i>not</i> reporting class rank
Blue Hills Regional HS	Catholic Memorial
Braintree HS	Dover Sherborn Regional HS
Brockton HS	Duxbury HS
Dedham HS	Hingham HS
Foxboro HS	Medfield HS
King Philip Regional HS	Natick HS
Mansfield HS	Needham HS

Milton HS	Newton North HS
North Quincy HS	Newton South HS
Quincy HS	Notre Dame Academy
Randolph HS	Sharon HS
Scituate HS	Wayland HS
Stoughton HS	Weston HS
Walpole HS	Westwood HS
Weymouth HS	Xaverian Brothers HS

Newly Proposed Add/Drop and Course Change Guidelines:

Course selection occurs in the spring. During this time students should select courses carefully, as once schedules have been made it is difficult to make changes. Changes are only considered for sound educational reasons, not a change of one's mind. *To add/drop or change the level of a course the student must obtain and complete the add/drop course form from Guidance. The following guidelines will serve to facilitate this process:*

1. No course changes are permitted during the first two days of school except when necessitated by extreme conflicts, changes in course offerings, or errors in the schedule.
2. Dropping a full year course will have the following implications:
 1. From the start of school through the mid-point (Progress Reports) of the first term results in no record of that course reflected on the student's transcript
 2. From the mid-point of first term and through the end of the term results in a "Withdrawal" with the student's grade to date
 3. No classes may be dropped after the start of term two
3. Dropping a semester course will have the following implications:

1. From the start of the term through the first two full cycles (fourteen school days) results in no record of that course reflected on the student's transcript
 2. After two full cycles (fourteen school days) and through the end of the term results in a "Withdrawal" with the student's grade to date
 3. No semester classes may be dropped after the start of the second term of the class.
4. If a teacher or student feels that a student has been misplaced in their current course (AP, Honors, CP1, CP2) the following steps should be followed within the time period set out in Section 2 and 3 respectfully:
1. Counselor will advise student to conference with teacher
 2. If necessary, the teacher will contact parents/guardian
 3. If a change is warranted guidance counselor in collaboration with teacher, parent and student will determine appropriate placement and begin the schedule change process.

A "W" (Withdrawal) will be reflected in the grade column on a student's transcript to show level change. If approved, the change will require signatures of guidance counselor, teacher, department head, vice-principal or principal and parents/guardian

5. As a general rule, student requests for certain teachers cannot be honored. If there have been particular experiences in the past that warrant individual consideration to override this rule, a meeting with the principal or his/her designee is required. For the request to be considered, the student must communicate his/her desire to change classes to his/her guidance counselor before the first day of the school year.
6. Adding classes after the first day of school will only be allowed as space and the student's schedule constraints permit. Schedules will not be rearranged to accommodate elective changes. All course additions must be made within the first two cycles (fourteen school days) of the class.

7. All exceptions to these guidelines will require a meeting with the Principal or his/her designee, the student, teacher, parent/guardian, and guidance counselor.

PART II

Add/Drop Change of Class Form

The committee decided to improve upon the existing form by adding the following section to the section under teacher comments:

The student will only be considered for a Course Change after he/she has his/her teacher complete the following:

The student has taken all tests/quizzes, etc?	Yes	No	If no, explain:
The student has completed all assignments?	Yes	No	If no, explain:
The student has stayed afterschool for extra help?	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
Current grade to date			

CLASS VALEDICTORIAN OR SALUTATORIAN

The student in the Canton High School graduating class with the highest cumulative weighted GPA at the end of 7 semesters (following semester 1 of a student's senior year) will receive the honor of being named the class valedictorian. The student with the second highest weighted GPA will be honored as the class salutarian. In the case of a numerical tie there more than one valedictorians or salutatorians.