

We would like to address some questions regarding the high school's movement to standards-referenced reporting in the fall of 2019. After reading these responses, please feel free to contact the high school guidance counselors or the high school principal if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Q. Is the high school moving away from weighted grades?

A. No, there is no discussion of changing our current weighting of grades in dual credit and AP classes. All dual credit courses carry an additional 0.5 weight on a student's GPA calculation, and all AP courses carry a 1.0 weight on the GPA calculation.

Q. Is the high school eliminating letter grades and student GPA's?

A. No, there is no discussion regarding doing away with letter grades. In addition, there is no discussion of doing away with or changing the way student GPA's are calculated. Letter grades will still be assigned to all courses and GPA calculations will be the same as they have always been.

Q. Will colleges accept grades that are assigned as the result of standards-referenced reporting?

A. Admissions officers evaluate course selection and associated letter grades provided by the high school. It is not in their practice to evaluate assessment strategies within individual courses. Because many high schools across the country use different grading scales, letter grade systems, and GPA methods, universities have had to develop internal systems to compare applicants fairly and equally. Universities are accustomed to examining a variety of criteria for admissions because students come to them from a wide range of schooling experiences including international, home school, and out-of-state schools. We also include a school profile explaining our course offerings, grade weighting, grading scales, etc.

Q. Does the high school rank students each year, and how does that impact my child's chances of getting into college?

A. During the senior year, students are categorized into percentile bands in increments of 5. When a student completes a college application, the student's counselor supplies the student's rank percentile (top 5%, top 10%, etc.) along with additional information not necessarily denoted on the transcript or application such as diploma type and an explanation of the difficulty of the student's senior schedule. If a student needs to know their exact class rank for a scholarship or admission, it is provided.

Q. Is the high school eliminating valedictorian and salutatorian?

A. No, there has been no discussion of eliminating this practice. After midterm (Q3) of the last semester of high school, the two students with the highest GPA are recognized as the valedictorian and salutatorian.

Q. How will my student ever get an “A” if the teachers are not even teaching the level 4 questions during their class?

A. Over the course of several evaluations for a given Essential Learning, level 4 assessment opportunities will be given. Sometimes the first assessment may not include level 4 questions, but future assessments will include those questions.

In math, level 4 questions are the same types of story problems that have always existed. In science, they could be a case study or an experiment. In language-base courses such English or social studies, they could be an essay or a writing prompt that asks students to analyze something.