



Weighted Grades

Beginning with the class of 2007, students graduating from Grand Forks Public School's high schools will have both a regular GPA and Rank in Class AND a weighted GPA and weighted Rank in Class on their academic transcripts.

After extensive research and discussion, the Grand Forks Public School's School Board directed this change with the hope that it will help some students in competition for admission at more selective colleges and help students garner more scholarship dollars. The Board also hopes this will encourage students to challenge themselves and take the most rigorous courses.

Weighting Grades

"Weighting" a grade adds to the grade point value earned in certain courses. In the Grand Forks Public Schools system, grades earned in weighted classes will earn an extra grade point. Therefore, an "A" in a weighted class will yield 5 grade points (4 points for the "A" and 1 more point as a weighted "bonus"), a "B" will yield 4 grade points, and a "C" will yield 3 grade points, etc.

Definitions

GPA is a student's "Grade Point Average." A GPA is a number calculated using two factors: credits earned and "grade points," which are awarded to letter grades.

Grade points are assigned to letter grades as follows: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0. Credits are generally based upon hours of classroom instruction. Most yearlong courses earn 1.000 credit. Most semester courses earn .500 credit. GPA is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points by the credits earned.

RIC is the student's "Rank in Class." RIC uses the GPA as a way of organizing students with the highest GPAs at the top of the lists. So a student with a RIC of 43 has the 43rd highest GPA in his/her graduating class. For weighted GPA purposes, all GPA's of 4.00 and above will be considered number 1. The GFPS do not publish the RIC on transcripts, but do make it available upon request.

Which Courses Will Be Weighted?

Advanced Placement (AP) courses and enriched will be weighted. Also, dual credit courses, which are transferable to 4-year colleges or universities and are either taught at the high school or university and are part of a sequence which is not available/attainable within the home high school, will be weighted.

All of the courses which qualify for weighting in your school will be clearly identified by the school.

For students moving into the District, grades from AP, International Baccalaureate (IB) and dual credit classes will be considered for weighting based on the previous schools weighting policy.



Weighted Grading: An Example of Effect

Below is a sample report card for a senior. This student is taking a rigorous course load. Three courses qualify for “weighted” grades” (enriched Alg II, AP U.S. History and AP Biology).

Course	Grade	Grade Points	Credits	Total Pts.
English	B	3	1	3
German III.	A	4	1	4
Physical Ed	B	3	.5	1.5
Enriched Alg II	A	4	1	4
AP History	B	3	1	3
AP Biology	B	3	1	3
Concert Band	A	4	1	4
TOTALS			6.5	22.5

(Regular GPA (22.5 Divided by 6.5) 3.46

The following shows how these grades will factor in the final calculation of the weighted GPA and RIC. Weighting changes this student’s GPAA from 3.43 to 3.86.

Course	Grade	Grade Points	Weight	Credits	Total Pts.
English	B	3		1	3
German III.	A	4		1	4
Physical Ed	B	3		.5	1.5
Enriched Alg II	A	5		1	5
AP History	B	4		1	4
AP Biology	B	4		1	4
Concert Band	A	4		1	4
TOTALS				6.5	25.5

Weighted GPA (25.5 divided by 6.5) 3.92

NOTE: Please contact your high school Counselor if you have questions or need to discuss a potential schedule change.

Will Weighted Grades Change Report Cards?

Weighted and regular GPAs will appear on the report card. The weighted GPA will be used in calculating the honor role.

The transcript will reflect the weighted and regular GPA. The RIC will not appear, but will be provided if requested as both the weighted and regular RIC.

Transition in policy

The weighted GPA will be transitioned in for courses taught during the 2006-07 year from that point on. The AP and enriched courses have had a special grading scale in the past, so they will not be weighted now.

Looking to your Future....

Grades and Course Selection

During the School Board’s investigation of weighted grading and college admissions, a great deal was learned.

The most selective colleges will always expect students to take the most rigorous course of study available in their high school. Avoiding a challenging course to “protect” a high GPA will hurt a student in these highly competitive settings.

While good grades are important, rigorous coursework is always the first, most important consideration for all students. Student essays and teacher recommendations are also powerful factors, generally more important than SAT or ACT scores.

Every college is different, and colleges will change from year to year as they make decisions about students. Some of these colleges will accept either a weighted or a regular GPA for scholarship qualification. The key is to investigate each college individually.