



TEAMWORK FOR EXCELLENCE

P L A N O
Independent School District

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PLANO ISD BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CLASS RANK AND GPA STUDY

A “ranking-only” GPA calculation will be used internally to determine the top 10%

PLANO, TEXAS, June 12 – In the fall of 2015, the Plano ISD Board of Trustees requested that staff members study the current practice of calculating and reporting class rank, and make recommendations related to this practice. A Class Rank Task Force was established in December 2015. Their initial review concluded in April 2017 with the school board request that the committee expand their study to include weighted grade point and asked that a combined recommendation be brought back.

In the fall of 2017, the district initiated a related GPA study, which was conducted through the formation of two additional groups—a GPA Work Study Group and a GPA Advisory Board. The final findings and recommendations related to both class rank and GPA were presented to the board in April 2018.

“This change fulfills our goal to create a system that benefits 100% of our students,” said Assistant Superintendent for Campus Services Susan Modisette. “In a district that is as high performing as Plano ISD and where class rank can represent very minor differences in GPA, we believe that not ranking will work in favor of more students’ being admitted to colleges of their choice.”

The years-long study, which included gathering input from students, parents and teachers, culminated this evening with the approval by the Plano ISD Board of Trustees of the attached recommendations. The approval came with a request from the board for staff to examine the possibility of implementing changes sooner than outlined in the attached.

“It is our hope that the use of a Ranking GPA will allow students to make selections, beyond core courses, based on their true interests, rather than pursuing classes simply because they have a highly weighted grade point attached,” said Modisette. “We hope to see more students following their aspirations to take courses in areas like career and technical education, fine arts and athletics.”

About Plano Independent School District

The Plano Independent School District (Plano ISD) (www.pisd.edu) endeavors to foster the highest level of student learning. The mission of Plano ISD is to provide an excellent education for each student. Plano ISD is located 20 miles north of Dallas, Texas and serves the residents of approximately 100 square miles in southwest Collin County, including 66 square miles in the city of Plano, northern portions of the cities of Dallas and Richardson and parts of the cities of Allen, Parker and Murphy. Plano ISD employs more than 6,900 staff members who serve nearly 54,000 students in 72 schools and 11 service facilities. Plano ISD schools empower students to be able to adapt to new learning and career opportunities throughout their lives, collaborate with, and contribute to the global community and to be disciplined and creative in their thinking.

Recommendations

Beginning with the incoming 8th grade class in 2018-2019

IMPLEMENTATION

1. ***For all students, calculate an all-inclusive GPA called the CUMULATIVE GPA. (no change)***
 - This calculation will be determined by adding the total of grade points earned for high school credit courses divided by the total number of credit hours attempted. (no change)
 - The cumulative GPA will appear on student transcripts, and will include all courses taken for high school credit excluding those identified as exceptions in policy. (no change)
 - The district will commit to complete transparency on how the Cumulative GPA is calculated. Information will be published in the course catalog, and students will receive information on the process from the counselors.

2018-2019
Counseling websites and transcripts

2019-2020
Course catalog

2. ***Report Cumulative GPA to all students at the end of each semester beginning in a student's 9th grade year.***

2018-2019

3. ***Implement a Latin System for recognizing students who reach district-determined standards of excellence.***
 - Designations will be based on the CUMULATIVE GPA and will include cum laude ("with honor"), magna cum laude ("with great honor") and summa cum laude ("with highest honor").

2018-2019
(Graduating Class of 2019)

4. ***Internally, use a ranking-only GPA calculation for the purpose of determining the top 10%.***
 - This calculation will be determined by adding the total of grade points earned for specific, designated high school credit courses divided by the total number of credit hours attempted.
 - Courses included in the Ranking GPA will be limited to courses in math, science, social studies, and English which the state of Texas has identified as eligible to count toward a graduation requirement. These courses will be identified in policy (Exhibit) and delineated as "Included in Ranking GPA" in the course catalog. [Draft of courses included in Ranking GPA](#)
 - The Ranking GPA is used as an internal measure only, solely for the purpose of determining the top 10% of the class and is not included on any information shared with a college, including transcripts.

2019-2020
(Graduating Class of 2023)

5. ***Rank the Top 10% as required by state law.***
 - Students in the top 10% will be identified and notified of this status.

Spring 2023
(Graduating Class of 2023)
Continue current practice
for graduating
Classes of 2019-2022

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| <p>6. Invite students identified as being in the Top 10% to request their specific rank, based on their determination of personal benefit.</p> | <hr/> <p>Spring 2023 Graduating Class of 2023</p> <hr/> |
| <p>7. Calculate Ranking GPA and notify students in the top 10% at specified times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 11th grade, students will be notified in early fall, February, and June. - In 12th grade, students will be notified in September, February, and following the 3rd grading period. | <hr/> <p>2021-2020 Graduating Class of 2023</p> <hr/> |
| <p>8. Begin the identification of Top 10% early in the fall semester of 11th grade, when students converge as a graduating class at their respective senior high campuses.</p> | <hr/> <p>2018-2019 Graduating Class of 2021</p> <hr/> |
| <p>9. After each Ranking GPA calculation period, publish the lowest ranking GPA earned by a student currently in the top 10%.</p> | <hr/> <p>In 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021, publish lowest <u>cumulative</u> GPA represented in top 10%</p> <p>In 2021-2022, publish lowest <u>ranking</u> GPA represented in top 10%</p> <hr/> |
| <p>10. Design an objective evaluation tool that identifies characteristics of courses to receive honors or advanced weight designations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For purpose of review and possible re-designation and to address a certain degree of arbitrariness that have been identified in the assignment of weighted grade points, this evaluation tool will be applied to all courses that earn high school credits. - This will include the review of dual credit courses and their respective weighting. - This will address the degree of arbitrariness that the committees surfaced in the assignment of weighted grade points, particularly in the 4.5 weighting of some courses. | <hr/> <p>2018-2019</p> <hr/> |

Policies Reviewed, with No Recommended Changes

- Valedictorian and salutatorian will be identified as the two students with the highest Ranking GPAs in their schools.
- Alternative methods for obtaining credit such as Credit by Exam, eSchool, and correspondence courses will be excluded from GPA calculations.
- High School credit courses taken prior to 9th grade will be counted in the GPA calculations.