

Policy GRAD-009: High school transcript standards

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NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Policy Manual

Item	Description
Policy Title	High School Grading and Transcript Standards
Policy Category	Graduation Requirements and Related Policies (GRAD)
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Statutory Reference	G.S. 115C-12(18); G.S. 115C-218.85; G.S. 116-11(10a)

****SBE approved removing COVID-19 Extenuating Circumstances Statement***

1. The Department of Public Instruction (“DPI”) shall maintain a transcript system in accordance with G.S. 115C-12(18) and 116-11(10a).

The standardized transcript shall include:

- grade point average (GPA),
- class rank,
- end-of-course test scores, and
- uniform course information including course code, course name, credits earned toward graduation, and credits earned for admission to an institution of higher education.

All local school administrative units shall use this system to produce standardized transcripts in an automated format for applications to institutions of higher education. Other public school units may use the this transcript system subject to the requirements of SBE Policy SBOP-18. All public school units that use the DPI transcript system shall follow the requirements of this policy, except that a charter school shall not be required to include class rank on the transcript.

2. Students shall receive both an un-weighted GPA that reflects no additional weighting for advanced courses and a weighted GPA that reflects additional quality points for advanced coursework. In accordance with General Statute 116-11 (10a), grade point average values and class rank shall be calculated by a standard method devised by the University of North Carolina and NC Community College systems.
3. Grade point average calculations are based upon standardization of academic course levels, weighting of course grades, and grading scales for **completed** high school courses.

3.1. Academic course levels and associated weights are defined as follows:

3.1.1. Standard courses – Course content, pace and academic rigor follow standards specified by the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCoS). Standard courses provide credit toward a high school diploma and require the end-of-course test for those courses identified as such in the NC accountability program. Quality points for the GPA calculation are assigned according to the standard 4.0 scale and receive no additional quality points.

3.1.2. Honors courses - Course content, pace and academic rigor place high expectations on the student, demanding greater independence and responsibility. Such courses are more challenging than standard level courses and are distinguished by a difference in the depth and scope of work required to address the NCSCoS. These courses provide credit toward a high school diploma and require the end-of-course test for those courses identified as such in the NC accountability program. An honors review process shall be followed, as outlined in the latest edition of the North Carolina Honors Course Implementation Guide. ~~The state course weighting system awards the equivalent of one (1) quality point to the grade earned in Honors courses.~~ Effective with the freshman class of 2015-16, the standard weighting for Honors courses shall be one-half (.5) of a quality point.

3.1.3. Advanced Courses, Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/Cambridge International Examination (AP/IB/CIE) courses - Course content, pace and academic rigor are considered college-level as determined by NC's Institutions of Higher Education and are designed and overseen by the College Board (AP), the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, or Cambridge Assessment. These courses are designed to enable students to earn high scores on the AP, IB, or CIE test, potentially leading to college credit. These courses provide credit toward a high school diploma and require an EOC in cases where the AP/IB/CIE course is the first course taken by a student in a subject where an EOC is required by the NC accountability program. ~~The state weighting system awards the equivalent of two (2) quality points to~~

~~the grade earned in an AP/IB/CIE course.~~ Effective with the freshman class of 2015-16, the standard weighting for AP/IB/CIE courses shall be one (1) quality point.

3.1.4. College courses ("dual enrollment") - Course content, pace and academic rigor are, by definition, college-level for these courses. College courses, which may be delivered by a community college, public university or private college or university, provide credit toward a high school diploma and may satisfy a graduation requirement or provide an elective course credit. The state weighting system adds the equivalent of one (1) quality point to the grade earned in community college courses included on the most recent Comprehensive Articulation Agreement Transfer List, and for courses taught at four-year universities and colleges.

4. Courses eligible for weights include higher-level high school courses that fall into one of the following categories:

4.1. Honors sections of standard-level academic courses, including NC Virtual Public School courses and other on-line courses, that are in accordance with the philosophy, rubric, procedures, guidelines, and standards for curriculum, instruction, and assessment as described in the *North Carolina Honors Course Implementation Guide*. Such courses are assigned additional quality points in accordance with section 3.1.2 above; it is not necessary to offer a standard level of a course to offer an honors level.

4.2. Pre-calculus, non-AP/IB calculus, mathematics courses beyond the level of calculus, and world language courses beyond the second-year level are considered inherently advanced and are assigned Honors-level weighting in accordance with section 3.1.2 above.

4.3. Arts education courses meeting the standards for proficient and advanced dance, music, theatre arts, and visual arts are assigned Honors-level weighting in accordance with section 3.1.2 above.

4.4. Project Lead the Way courses approved for college credit are assigned college-level weighting in accordance with section 3.1.4 above.

5. Grading Scale

5.1 High schools (or middle schools) shall use one grading scale for high school courses: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; < 59 = F. ~~Final numeric Number~~ grades shall be entered into the NC-SIS. ~~All non-elective courses shall receive a numeric grade.~~

5.1.1 Other grading marks are possible and are to be used as described below beginning 2025-26:

Audit (AUD) may be used based on local board policy and does not receive course credit.

FF may only be used for a student who does not have a passing grade based on content and also has significant absences based on local board policy. ~~A student may not fail a course based solely on attendance.~~

Incomplete (INC) may be temporarily used for extenuating circumstances approved by the Superintendent, principal, or designee, such as medical conditions. It is recommended that this grade be completed within the next school year.

Pass (P) may be used for elective courses. A pass may not be awarded for non-elective graduation requirements, **unless a student transfers from an unaccredited or international school.**

Withdraw (WP) may be used for courses that a student withdraws from during the current semester and receives no course credit.

Credit by Demonstrated Mastery (CDM) reflects earning credit for a course through the CDM process.

5.1.2 The conversion of grades to quality points is standardized. Grades and the corresponding number of quality points are shown below.

Standard scale -- Numeric Grades with a letter grade legend.

90-100 = 4.0	80-89 = 3.0	70-79 = 2.0	60-69 = 1.0	<59 = 0.0	WF = 0.0
AUD = 0.0	FF = 0.0	INC = 0.0	P = 0.0	WP = 0.0	

5.2 Elementary schools and middle schools are allowed to use grading systems approved by their local boards of education. **Final grades shall be entered into the NC-SIS.**

5.2.1. It is recommended that local boards of education base their elementary and middle school grading scales on the following widely used scale:

90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; < 59 = F.

5.2.2 Local boards of education may also choose to use a letter-based scale such as the following: S (Satisfactory), N (Needs Improvement), U (Unsatisfactory), PR (Promoted), RE (Retained).

6. In accordance with GS 116-11 (10a), each student's official class rank shall be listed on the standardized transcript.

6.1. The official class rank shall be calculated using the weighted grade point average in which quality points are provided for passing grades in standard, Honors, AP/IB/CIE, and college-level courses according to the weighting system defined in sections 3 and 4 above.

6.2. Local education agencies may re-calculate class rank for local purposes such as determination of valedictorian, salutatorian, and other graduation honors. Such re-calculations may be used for local purposes only, and the official class rank provided on the standardized transcript shall not be altered.

7. Out-of-NC-Public-School transfer students include students transferring from private schools, out-of-state schools, out-of-country schools or home schools into the NC public

schools. PSUs shall determine what is best for these students to provide a smooth transition between the student's previous school and their NC public school.

7.1 NCDPI ~~has developed~~ provides guidance regarding transcripts, grades, academic placement, etc. for this student population which may be found with NC-SIS information and the course code master list.

7.2 PSUs shall carefully examine all sources and/or documentation for authenticity to ensure effective transitions.

7.3 High school grades shall be converted to the NC grading scale based on NC standardized transcript elements.

7.4 Credits for half a course completed due to a student transferring into a NC public school may be reflected on a student's transcript. If the course has an associated End-of-Course (EOC) exam, the NC course code must be used, not the originating school's code. No other half-credits may be earned or recorded.

7.5 PSUs are not required to award numeric grades for courses transferred in from a nonpublic school in NC or a public or nonpublic school outside of NC if a numeric grade is unavailable from the originating school prior to enrolling in the PSU.

Policy Reference Disclaimer:

These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State

GS 116-11(10a)

Description

[Powers and duties generally \(Community Colleges\)](#)