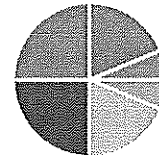


Parent's info about students



■ Middle ■ Freshman ■ Soph.
■ Junior ■ Senior ■ Grads

Questions only for students:

If class rank was not a factor in college admissions, how would that affect your high school course choices? Not at all

(Still want to make all A's and have a strong GPA regardless of whether class rank matters.)

What is working well?

Parent answers:

Giving high weight to AP classes

Gives credit to the four core subjects

"1. All students who enter high school are on the same footing and have the same chance to graduate with a high class rank. No preference is given to students who are GT, and the courses a student takes at a young age in middle school won't impact their high school rank.

2. The system is relatively simple and easy to figure out, so students know what they need to do to improve their rank. There is no guessing involved.

3. The system encourages well-rounded students by limiting the number of weighted credits. Students can take four weighted courses and still have room in their schedules for CTE classes, athletics, fine arts, and other things that interest them.

4. The system encourages students to take a weighted course in each of the four core subjects. Even though this is no longer required under our graduation plans, it is still required by most competitive universities. Also, four credits of English, Math, and Science is still required for automatic admission to our state schools. We should have a weighted system that will permit our high-ranking students to be admitted to competitive schools, and they certainly should qualify for auto admission to our state universities."

Student answer: It encourages people to take tougher classes and the system allows for flexibility in course weighting

What are areas where we could improve our practices, specific to course weighting?

Admin: WE need to give AP courses a higher weight. One valedictorian

Parents: The current system does not award weight for very difficult classes such as AP foreign language. Also, the current system awards the same weight for the same course that is taught at different levels (ex. Pre-AP Physics and AP Physics I)

Our numbers make no sense (edited by C to add: I assume this is referring to the 7 point scale)

Clearly explaining the way it works

Students: Weighting classes that vary in difficulty differently.

Should pre-AP, AP, and Dual Credit all be weighted the same?

Admin: No

Parents: 5 Yes, 1 no opinion, 1 No

Students: No

Explain your reasoning

Admin: AP is harder than DC and Pre-AP

Parents:

- Kids should be rewarded for taking more challenging course work in their core classes. Certainly not all three of these options require the same amount of work, but we can't complicate the system by creating more levels of weighting. Students and Parents need to make the decision as to which class is most appropriate, but all three of these options should be weighted more than an "academic" level class.
- "My answer above really should be ""It Depends."" I think it is a terrible idea to assign different weight to courses. Every weighted course should receive the same weight. We solve the problem of weighting by deciding that some courses should not be weighted at all, not by reducing the weight that some courses receive. Varying course weight causes lots of problems:
- 1. It makes the system more complicated. How can you limit the number of weighted credits when some courses are earning .5 weight and others are earning full weight? It's going to be confusing and hard for everyone to figure out -- the students, the parents, the teachers, EVERYONE.
 - 2. It means that the courses a student takes in middle school matter A LOT, and it puts GT math students at a huge class rank advantage. A student who takes GT math in middle school will come into high school with time in his/her schedule to take an extra AP math class that pre-AP students won't be able to take. It also means that 5th grade students and parents need to be educated when choosing middle school classes, so they can make proper choices that will set their student up for class rank success in high school. It is too late for the current middle schoolers! A current 8th grader who qualified for GT math but opted out is now disadvantaged for no reason other than the fact that they didn't know the rules were going to change midstream. This student could have taken GT math, but instead took pre-AP, so in high school he will take pre-AP Geometry, pre-AP Algebra II, pre-AP pre-cal, and AP calculus. If he had known in middle school that this choice would ultimately impact his class rank, he would have chosen to take GT courses instead, and would have taken pre-AP Algebra II, pre-AP pre-cal, AP Statistics, and AP Calculus in high school, resulting in an extra full-weight credit. (The same logic

will apply to foreign language if the decision is made to award weight to foreign language classes. Students who take two years of Spanish in middle school and enter high school taking Pre-AP Spanish III are advantaged over kids who choose to take a different language and don't have the option of taking two years in middle school.) Having students make class rank decisions in 5th grade is a terrible consequence of weighting pre-AP and AP differently!

- 3. Most pre-AP classes do not have an AP equivalent course (i.e. English I and II, Bio I, Chem I, Pre-calculus, etc.). Those courses all are very difficult and deserve full weight. Students work just as hard in those classes as they do in later AP classes. Under the current system, a student makes the choice to take the harder class because it receives a full weight, so a B in the pre-AP class equals an A in the academic class; thus the GPA is not negatively impacted by a B in pre-AP. But if a pre-AP class only receives partial weight, and there is no option for an AP version of the course, students could actually hurt their GPA by making a B in a difficult pre-AP class. They'd be better off taking the academic course and getting an A. The district should not implement a system that will encourage kids to dumb down their education out of fears that their GPA will be negatively impacted.
- If the DC classes are AP classes and colleges treat them the same, then yes, same weight.
- I feel there should be some weighting to all, I feel that AP and Dual Credit should receive more weighting.

Students: Pre-AP is much easier than AP. Same goes for DC.

If we were to change this, what would you suggest as a new rule

Admin: 1 point for AP .5 points for Pre-AP/DC

English I and II would be weighted; Pre-AP World History would not. Pre-AP Biology and Chemistry would be weighted; Pre-AP Physics would not. This way, every student would be encouraged to take the hardest version of the course to receive the weight. It solves all the problems, and there is really no downside.

1. Students don't earn a weighted grade point for taking an easier version of a class. 2. Students aren't punished for decisions they made in middle school. 3. Students aren't penalized because they didn't qualify for GT. 4. The system is simple and easy to figure out.

The only possible negative is that students will lose interest in taking the "middle of the road" pre-AP course. In other words, enrollment in pre-AP world history and pre-AP physics will drop off. Is that really even a negative? Those courses should probably be eliminated anyway, and having enrollment naturally decline is an excellent reason for discontinuing them. "

I think there should be a staggered system.

Students: Weigh pre-AP and DC differently.

Should we cap the # of courses weighted?

Admin: no opinion **Parents:** 1 No the rest Yes **Students:** yes

Explain your reasoning?

Parents: The kids at MHS are already under an enormous amount of pressure to take weighted classes so that they can try to be in the top quarter. As parents and educators, we need to draw the line and give these kids "permission" to take classes that aren't AP. I would hate to see a kid who really likes photography, opting not to take that because he or his parents want him to take AP German for the weighted point. The fact that some AP classes in foreign language/arts/etc are not weighted does not prevent a truly interested child from taking them. These are elective classes and I believe that adding weight for all these options would create even more stress and anxiety for our kids. If you want to place out of Spanish and/or become fluent, then you are electing to indulge that interest. But if you just want to complete your third year of a foreign language, your GPA shouldn't take a hit because you took academic. The core 4 are required so I feel those should be weighted if you choose the harder curriculum.

Level of difficulty in courses

Students should be well-rounded. Our district has done a great job of expanding CTE offerings. We have wonderful fine arts programs, and athletics are fantastic for building healthy bodies and healthy self-esteem. We want to encourage that! If our students can take an unlimited number of weighted courses, they aren't taking what they are interested in -- they are taking what they have to take to improve their GPA. The stress level would increase exponentially!

Only the 4 core courses should be weighted but now that we are not a 4x4, it would affect students differently.

If they take the class then they deserve the weight.

Students: We don't want kids committing suicide

If so, should we continue to limit weighting to core classes (math, language arts, science, social studies)?

Admin: no

Parents: mixed

Students: no

If we were to change the number and/or types of courses that receive weight, what would be your suggested changes?

Admin: Foreign Language

Parents: I answered no above, but for the most part I think it should remain limited. This is why. We cannot have students graduating at the top of our classes that are unable to be admitted to competitive universities. At a campus visit for UT's Business Honors Program, we were told "Even though the 4x4 is no longer required, you must take the 4x4 to be considered a competitive applicant." The current GPA weighting system encourages students to take the 4x4. Even though it is no longer required for graduation, it is required for students to be competitive college applicants. Maybe we could make one small change. Perhaps we could allow for 4 weighted math credits, 4 weighted science credits, and 4 weighted English credits, but only 3 weighted social studies credits, then give students the option to earn that final weighted course in some other subject. Maybe they would want to take AP Chem II and

AP Bio II in the same year. Maybe they want to take AP Spanish IV. Maybe AP Art History. BUT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE LIMIT IT TO 4 WEIGHTED CREDITS PER YEAR. OTHERWISE STUDENTS COULD END UP BEING SITUATED DIFFERENTLY AT THE END OF THE JUNIOR YEAR WHEN CLASS RANK IS SO IMPORTANT FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS. But honestly, I'm conflicted on this, as long as there are still universities out there looking for the 4x4. And most schools are -- even UT and A&M.

I think higher level classes (elective or not) should receive some kind of weight.

One extra course such as Spanish AP, Art AP, an extra Science, etc.

Are there courses you would take/have taken if our course weight rules were different?

If one had to have a high class rank to take AP classes rather than pre-AP or DC, then they would've taken those courses.

Students: Evenly balanced in grade levels. 64% expect to go to 4 year school, 22% to 2 year, 8% to tech, 5% to military. Average familiarity with weighting

1 Admin (Registrar)

Questions only for students:

If class rank was not a factor in college admissions, how would that affect your high school course choices? Not at all: mixed views – most chose the middle answer (somewhat)

What is working?

Registrar: Fair and equal

Students:

- I'm passing every class
- The fact that it works
- Choosing the 4 main classes students focus on
- Nothing
- Having multiple courses being taken into account is very helpful and fair for students who take many advanced classes.
- What is better is that harder classes gain weighted scores.
- Makes students study harder

Where can we improve?

Registrar: Adding GPA weight to advanced elective courses

Students:

- IB Pre-AP and AP should be weighted differently
- The weighting of preAP and AP courses rig the same
- the number of classes that weight into gpa's
- IB!!!!!! Deserves more!!!!
- We should include advanced language classes into the weighting
- I think there should be some distinction between how the classes are weighted, for example, standard classes should have no weight, pre-AP classes should have 1 point of weight, AP courses should have 2 points and IB courses should have 3 points, and the full AP ans IB should have some type of weighted score.
- Make all advanced classes different weight based on the difficulty

Should pre-AP, AP, and Dual Credit all be weighted the same?

Registrar: Yes

Students: No

Explain

Registrar: All listed classes require advanced academic work.

Students:

- Then people taking the harder class get the same as people taking an easy class
- PreAP should be weighted as less
- These classes are different in difficulty and higher classes taken should be recognized more.
- If you work hard to earn a grade in a harder class level, you should be rewarded for that.
- They all have varying levels of difficulty.
- They are not the same in terms of difficulty, topics and education. Therefore they should not be weighted exactly the same. This way, students are encouraged to take the easier courses because they have the same weight. For example, if I do the work for an AP course, I want to have a better weighted score than if I had done the pre-AP version of the same course.
- its not fair for the higher level classes

If we were to change this, what would you suggest as a new rule?

Registrar: If there is concern re having a Pre-AP and an AP course both in the same subject area carrying the same weight, do not offer the Pre AP course (ex. Pre AP Geo and AP Geo)

- Students: IB AP and preap should be weighted differently
- PreAP is weighted as less
- Give more points to Higher level classes students take
- Pre-ap should have less of a weight in the GPA than AP or IB lessons
- Each class gets a new evaluation based on difficulty in comparison with the most basic class, then the points go up as the difficulty goes up and so on.
- make different classes different weights

Should we cap the number of courses that count for weight during a student's high school experience?

- Registrar: Yes
- Student: Mostly no, a few no opinion and one yes

Explain

Registrar: "Limiting the number of advanced weighted courses a student can take in a single year builds in fairness: there are students who carry a schedule that does not allow them to fill their day with all courses that necessarily carry an advanced GPA weight (ex. Athletes or Guthrie Center Students, or students who travel to HCC for a DC course); these students may be limited to taking 7 academic courses a day on an 8 period a day schedule or limited to 6 on a 7 period a day schedule.

Students:

- Also, limiting the number of advanced weighted courses a student can take in a single year allows for fairness to those students who may move within the District to a school with a different daily schedule."
- There should be as many as the student or school sees fit
- No, if anything add on to help lower grades students.
- There are students who take many more advanced classes that are not counted into their GPA

If so, should we continue to limit weighting to core classes (math, language arts, science, social studies)

Registrar: no

Students: mostly no

If we were to change the number and/or types of courses that receive weight, what would be your suggested changes?

Registrar: "All classes labeled as Pre AP/AP or DC should receive advanced GPA weight including Foreign Language, Guthrie Center Courses, Perf. Arts, and Fine Arts. (Not necessarily classes labeled with a number that is a higher level, ex. Level IV; only those classes labeled as advanced, ex. Pre AP/AP, DC)

Students:

- Each year, during course selection, students who choose courses that carry Pre AP/AP or DC weight, will select which four of their Pre AP/AP or DC courses will be weighted in calculating GPA (if a student selects more than 4 Pre AP/AP, DC courses).
- Courses taken in summer school and night school should calculate into GPA including both original credit and retake/restore.
- A Pre AP and AP version of the same course should not be offered.
- Middle school classes taken for high school credit should not calculate into GPA. "
- I would change the number to 6 Instead of 4
- Weight language and core classes
- At least 2 more classes added to gpa, chosen by student
- Include languages
- I suggest that all but two of the courses should be weighted, giving equal opportunity to athletes and fine arts students.
- maybe 6 out of 8 classes including the language classes

Are there courses you would take/have taken if our course weight rules were different?

Mostly yes and a few "I don't know"

Explain

- I'd take a harder class so that it would show up on my transcript as me being smart
- I'm not familiar with all the courses, though there must be one I would take
- If the weight for low grades classes didn't pull the others down so much, i would chose more advanced classes because i would not have been as pressured to do excessive work in order for it to my affect me
- I would have tried to take more science or math advanced classes since I am interested in that field of study and it would have affected my GPA
- Depending on the weight rules, I would have to re-evaluate my options.

If class rank was not a factor in college admissions, how would that affect your high school course choices?

Most chose the middle choice (somewhat)

Explain

- Well WAIS is a good school regardless of the class ranking system
- I choose courses that sound interesting or that may help out in the future.
- I would not be as scared to take a more advanced class because if it's not one of my strongest areas, it would not affect my college application chances to get in
- Personally I believe if class rank was not a factor in college admissions my high school courses would be somewhat different. I would probably try to take more classes that relate to the field of study I want to study in the future. If they where advanced then wouldn't worry about how taking many of them will make maintaining my GPA much more difficult
- I don't know that I would be eager to change my classes because the rank does not matter, it is more likely for me to work even harder and choose difficult courses because I know that most of the student population would not be concerned with raising their grades, making my grades stand out in the college applications.
- The stress would reduce

Senior with plans to attend 4 year school and expected to be in the top 10%

Parent and student 3/5 in familiarity with grade weighting system. Admin 4/5

If class rank was not a factor in college admissions, how would that affect your high school course choices?

Not at all - I would still take AP.

What is working well in our current system of course weighting?

Parent: It promotes kids being in activities they love like band.

Student: They advantage me in class rank so that we are all taking the same classes.

What are areas where we could improve our practices, specific to course weighting?

Parent: We could make it so that other AP classes are weighted.

Student: I would make electives weighted.

Admin: I wouldn't change it. I think students do not understand the current practice.

Should pre-AP, AP, and Dual Credit all be weighted the same?

Parent: Yes These are challenging courses for students.

Student: No Pre-AP and AP should be the same; I would make dual credit higher than AP.

Admin: Yes They are all college level course work.

Should we cap the number of courses that count for weight during a student's high school experience?

Parent: Yes We don't want to promote students taking 7 weighted courses instead of some of the courses that are not weighted but still important to their development.

Student; Yes I want to take fun classes.

Admin: Yes Students are overwhelmed by the number of advanced courses in junior year and above and often leads to students who do not have a connected high school experience.

If so, should we continue to limit weighting to core classes (math, language arts, science, social studies)

Student No We could have some AP courses included.

Admin: Yes I would limit the number of courses to a maximum of 4 per year.

Are there courses you would take/have taken if our course weight rules were different?

Yes I would take more dual credit and AP science course instead of AP English, but I have to take AP English to stay competitive in the Top 10%