

Class rankings are one method of measuring academic performance. The Watauga County Board of Education (the “board”) also recognizes other means of evaluating student achievement, including grade point average, courses completed, rigorousness of curriculum, results of tests and assessments, and recommendation letters.

High school principals shall provide for the compilation of class rankings to be listed on student transcripts and may make class rank information available periodically to students and their parents or guardians, and to other institutions at the request of the student or the student’s parent or guardian. Beginning with the class of 2019, while no valedictorian and salutatorian will be designated, all seniors who have earned a cumulative weighted grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or above at the end of the first semester of their senior year shall be recognized as honor graduates in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. Students with weighted GPAs between 3.5 and 3.99 will graduate Cum Laude.
2. Students with weighted GPAs between 4.00 and 4.4 will graduate Magna Cum Laude.
3. Students with GPAs above 4.4 will graduate Summa Cum Laude.

Principals shall ensure that class ranking is computed in a fair and consistent manner as provided in State Board of Education Policy GRAD-009. The superintendent and principal shall ensure that students and parents receive adequate notice as to how class rank is calculated and shall provide written procedures on how students with equal grades, or grades that may be perceived as equal, will be treated. Nothing in this policy provides a student with any legal entitlement to a particular class rank or title. Although the student grievance procedure provided in policy 4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure, may be utilized to resolve disputes formally, the board encourages parents, students and principals to reach a resolution informally on any matters related to class rank.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -276, -288; 116-11(10a); State Board of Education Policy GRAD-009

Cross References: Parental Involvement (policy 4002), Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (policy 4010), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (policy 3000), Recognizing Excellence (policy 3440)

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Revised: January 28, 2016; August 14, 2017 and March 15, 2018 (Legal references only); July 9, 2018; February 9, 2022 (Technical Update Only)