



Student Ranking at Bellport High School

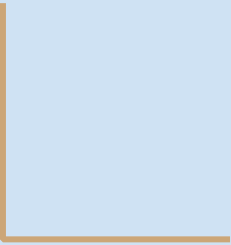
Reframing the Competition

ClipperPRIDE



Overview



- Our goals
 - What is rank?
 - Pros and Cons
 - Student Voices
 - How can we better honor our seniors' accomplishments
 - Honor Graduates!
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What is the goal?

- We want to reframe the competition to be about their future, not only at Bellport High School
 - *Strategic Planning Goal #3: Ensure that each of our students is academically prepared to succeed in college, career, life, and the global economy.*
 - Students will be competing for admissions spots at competitive colleges against other students across the country
 - We want our students to take the most challenging courses they are interested in and prepare them for their future career goals and majors
- We want to encourage students to do their personal best
- We want to accurately measure their academic success - their weighted and unweighted averages demonstrate their academic performance
 - Rank does not show students' success. Last year, #25 had a 100 average.
 - 114 had a 90%
- We are preparing students for when they leave us!

Current Status

- Bellport High School ranks all students on a numerical basis beginning in September of their Senior year.
 - This form of ranking is referred to as “exact rank”
- This ranking uses the weighted cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) to identify student rank from first to last of the entire class.
 - Ex: If we have 332 students in the Cohort of 2024, we have students ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd, ... 331st, and 332nd.
- This rank becomes “final” at the conclusion of the 2nd Quarter of the student’s Senior year (also referred to as 7th Semester)
- Only students from within the graduating cohort are included in the rank. Students who are graduating early, after their original cohort, or in our alternately assessed programs, are not included

How is class rank used?

- The student's rank is populated on the transcript and sent to colleges and any other organization requesting student academic records
- Rank is used to determine and recognize student rank 1st to 10th of the Senior Class.
- At the conclusion of 7th Semester, final ranks determines Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and Essayist
- Rank is expressed on college applications, counselor feedback forms, scholarship applications, and the student's academic transcript



The Pros and Cons of using class rank

| Pros | Cons |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Rank provides insight about our total student performance● Allows colleges to compare one BHS student to another● Gives student advanced notice of Top 10 ranking early in the year, allowing them time to adjust academic approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Rank only promotes the few students ranked at the top (specifically the top 10)● In the Class of 2024, 25 students had over a 100.00 GPA and 15 of them are not recognized for that achievement● Promotes unhealthy anxiety related to competition between academically elite students● Emphasizes competition only within Bellport High School and does not support their post graduate plans● Ranking can be a detriment to strong students getting into college● Student awareness of rank could limit motivation● Ranking is frequently recalculated by individual colleges using their metrics● Very few colleges classify class rank as a benefit to admission |



Why consider elimination?

The most important reason that class rank is on the decline is because it really isn't a direct measure of student achievement - *David Hawkins of NACAC (Chief Education Policy Officer)*

There is no direct link established between the use of class rank and college admission. Most colleges and universities use a broad set of indicators to make admission decisions. When high schools no longer use class rank it reduces stress on students and lessens the risk of taking challenging and rigorous classes. - *WNY High School Counselors' Association*

Rankings can be a detriment to strong students getting into the college of their choice - *College Board*

A system of class rank should not carry with it an underlying assumption that academic success is a scarce commodity available only to a select few students - *NASSP (National Association of Secondary School Principals)*

The vicious rivalry and inevitable resentment on display as a handful of overachievers battle it out over tiny differences in GPA has led some schools to stop ranking, or at least to identify a batch of high-scoring kids as co-valedictorians — a tiny step in the right direction. - *The Washington Post*



How would this impact Bellport HS st

- **We need to reframe the competition!**
 - Students can more accurately prepare for college admissions; focusing on how their average and course selections will be used as admissions criteria when applying to colleges with students across the country, not just fellow BHS students!
- Course selection would be driven by their post-secondary goals, course rigor, interests, access to future classes, etc
 - Some students have prioritized taking courses that have advanced weighting and will not take electives that do not come with additional course weighting because it might “knock them out of the Top 10”. We want our students to take the courses they are interested in rather than choosing courses based solely on their rank
- Students can focus on their individual academic achievements

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: How will colleges review our student's for acceptance without class rank?

A: Most colleges report either eliminating that component (i.e. class rank) from the admission decision process without bias, or creating their own ranking system that systematically allows them to compare student between different high schools.

Q: How do students apply for scholarships that are suggested for student's within a certain class rank?

A: Just like colleges, most scholarship review committees waive that component without bias if their high school does not rank or they request additional information.

Q: What does a student do when a college or scholarship REQUIRES class rank for consideration?

A: We will continue to have the ability to produce a class rank in these uncommon scenarios. In all of these cases, counselors are requested to determine if the student falls within a certain percentile. School counselors can provide this information without giving the student their exact rank.

Frequently Asked Questions cont:

Q: How does the class rank hurt the majority of our students?

A: Class rank identifies how our students rank against each other, when in reality, they are competing with students from other schools for college admission. Our rank changes each year based on the students in that grade.

- A student ranked 2nd in 2021 may have be 9th in 2024 (which does not tell colleges much about our students nor school). Finally, students could be ranked lower than peers in other schools, solely based on our grading practices and the academic outcomes of other students at BHS, thus placing them at a disadvantage (e.g. Our #4 could be Valedictorian [#1] if attending a neighboring high school).

From a student perspective...

- Being #11...
- Being in the top 10 in the fall, and not the spring...
- Being #332...

Student Feedback

- We met with our seniors in June 2024 to discuss their experience with the rank process. We asked how they felt about the process and if they felt it benefited them or not
- Common responses
 - Students felt unnecessary pressure from rank, including strained peer relationships
 - It caused students who were high achieving to feel negatively regarding their performance because they were not in the “Top 10”, even when they had over a 100 average
 - Students actively changed their senior year courses to less challenging courses so that their rank would be higher, even if it impacted their future majors
 - Students did not take electives because the courses were not weighted
 - Students liked the idea of celebrating anyone with over a certain GPA (for example 95-100, or 100+) instead of an exact rank

Student feedback

“I don’t like how people alter their schedules based on the rank. People often drop electives just to take AP classes so their grade is weighted more. This hurts the students SO MUCH. Not only mentally but in what career they choose. The purpose of an elective is to find things we enjoy and careers however the rank causes them to not explore possible careers that they will enjoy. Even if students get over a 100 they are mad at themselves because they’re “only the 18th” but they have over a 100! Throughout high school this has made me very mad, honestly one of the only flaws I see in this school. I am an avid learner and always want to learn more, which is why I took many electives in 10,11th grade and I even dropped my lunch to take an extra elective because I wanted to learn more and explore more options. Dropping my lunch and working harder didn’t bother me but what did was watching people do less work and being ahead of me just because of the way they organized their schedule. It’s unfortunate because had I done my schedule the way they did and dropped my electives I would be ahead. I know this because in classes which we are both in I have done better or the same as them however I ended with a lower rank because I took electives. I don’t want to sound mad at you guys but it’s the system that has a flaw. I feel that students who do less work and take less classes shouldn’t just be higher in rank because of AP classes”

“I don’t like it because it makes it seem like other students are not as seen or not as included.”

“The number made me feel worthless I was like in the 80s even tho I had a 4.0”

“Students that take electives aren’t able to compete for top 10”

“How it makes other students feel like they aren’t smart enough or they aren’t doing enough AP’s because they want to enjoy other high school courses.”

“It only celebrates the top 10 students when many have almost the same grade as them as well as working just as hard”

“I don’t like when some people might choose not to take certain classes because it will negatively affect their rank even though they will need it for their future college major”

Moving Forward

- Continue our tradition of naming a valedictorian and salutatorian
 - Rank would be run for this purpose only and student's would not have access to this information, except the top 2
 - These students would conduct graduation speeches
- Our Class Essayist will be chosen by an Essay Contest. Students who wish to make a speech at graduation may submit an essay to a panel of stakeholders to review and choose our third graduation speech
 - This gives a great opportunity to hear from different voices within the graduating class! We want to hear from all of our Clippers!
 - Submissions will align with how they embody Clipper PRIDE

Moving Forward

- We would create the title of “Honor Graduates”
 - All students who earn a weighted average of 95.000%-99.999% will be given the designation “Graduation with Honors”.
 - All students who earn a weighted average of 100.000% or higher will be given the designation of “Graduation with Highest Honors”.
 - These seniors would be honored at our Evening of Excellence event and given a special piece of graduation regalia to signify their achievement. This would be instead of a Top 10; as the Top 10 does not recognize all of our outstanding student averages. Last year, 25 seniors had over a 100.00 average. Both number 10 and 11 had over a 102.00 average
- GPA's would continue to be run after the completion of 6 semesters and the final designation will be given based on the final 7 semesters (February of senior year)
- This would be a cohort rollout with the Freshmen (Class of 2028)

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Representing all
of our student
achievements!



SOUTH COUNTRY
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BELLPORT HIGH SCHOOL

ANNOUNCING "HONOR GRADUATES" FOR THE CLASS OF 2028!

HONOR GRADUATES

Starting with the Class of 2028, Bellport High School will be introducing a new way to honor our graduates at our graduation ceremony for their academic accomplishments.

All students who earn a weighted average of 95.000%-99.999% will be given the designation "**Graduation with Honors**".

All students who earn a weighted average of 100.00% or higher will be given the designation of "**Graduation with Highest Honors**".

These students will be given special graduation regalia to wear at the graduation ceremony, to signify this outstanding academic accomplishment. Students will also be honored at various senior award events throughout their senior year. Honor Graduates will be named at the beginning of senior year for college application purposes and then again at the end of the 7th semester of high school (spring of senior year) for graduation ceremony purposes.


TOP STUDENT RECOGNITIONS

The Class of 2028 will also honor the class:
Valedictorian: The student with the highest weighted average from the Class of 2028 cohort

Salutatorian: The student with the second highest weighted average from the Class of 2028 cohort

Essayist: *New!* - The Class Essayist will be chosen by a panel of stakeholders to create and read the third speech at graduation. Interested students will be able to submit their speech and be chosen based on their submission. More information to come!

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Thank you!