

SHS Grade Reporting

Frequently Asked Questions for Families

Missing Work & Zeros: *Under this new system, will students really not get zeros?*

An F is still a zero. Consequences and accountability remain. The difference is that the new scale fixes a mathematical flaw: on the 100-point scale, failing grades represent the majority (64%) of the scale. On a 4.0 scale, an F is a 0.0 and 1/5th of the scale — a more proportionate penalty. Teachers would be more likely to assign a zero knowing it would be a mathematically sound and fair representation.

Grade Precision & Accuracy: *Don't letter grades lack precision compared to a 100-point scale?*

We believe a percentage grade does not offer a clearer indication of a student's level of learning over a letter grade. Letter grades encourage a greater focus on mastery of skills and content, versus earning points. Student focus on point management could create greater grade anxiety and distract from learning.

College Admissions: *Won't moving to letter grades make our students less competitive?*

Admissions offices explicitly state there would be no negative impact with this change. Colleges and universities evaluate applicants within the context of their own high school. The letter grade and 4.0 scale is one that colleges routinely see from applicants and use in their own grade reporting.

"An A–F grading scale on a 4.0 system will not affect our ability to review transcripts, nor will it impact their competitiveness in our admissions pool."

— Auburn University Admissions

"We are looking at the courses taken, their rigor, and the grades earned in them. These sort of changes would not affect your students' reviews in our process."

— Cornell University Admissions

The Class of 2027 (Seniors): *Will transcripts be changed while seniors are applying to colleges?*

After gathering student and parent feedback, SHS has adjusted the implementation plan to ensure smooth and timely submissions for the Class of 2027. For rising seniors, the current transcript with numerical grades will be sent to colleges, and the A–F scale will only apply to grades earned in the '26–27 school year. A formal explanation of the grading change will accompany all mid-year grades and final transcripts sent to colleges.

AP / Honors Weighting: *Will students lose the advantage of the weighted GPA?*

Weighting of cumulative GPAs will continue. Extra weight is automatically built into higher level courses: a standard "A" = 4.0, an Honors "A" = 4.33, and an AP/IB "A" = 4.66. Since different high schools implement different weighting values, most colleges and universities will apply their own weighting calculation.

System Unification: *Isn't this an unproven, confusing new grading system?*

The letter scale is a well-established, traditional system that serves to unify multiple grading systems at SHS. We currently use several grading scales (MYP 1–8, IB 1–7, AP 1–5, and Proficiency scales) that already measure skills rather than simple content knowledge. Shifting to A–F unifies these assessment systems into one clear language that students, parents, and colleges can more easily understand.