

Grade Point Average Committee Proposal—July 30, 2008

Our current proposal is based on discussions with and information from meetings and e-mails with many parents, the junior high parent organization and PHS staff since May 2007. It is also based on discussions with the Board of Education and the Curriculum Committee. We appreciate the opinions, efforts and communication of all those involved in helping us determine a proposal that is in the best interest of all of our students.

Here are the 4 parts to the proposal:

1) Students will be on a weighted 5.0 scale for all AP and for some of the highest level honors classes (see those listed below). All other honors classes will be on a 4.0 weighted scale.

Rationale: Only some courses have an academic level deserving of a 5.0 weighted grade, which is indicative of college level work. Typically, honors courses are accelerated but not college level. Also, our research revealed that for most colleges, weighting grades does not provide an advantage for acceptance or scholarships. Lastly, we predict that students will take more elective courses related to careers they will pursue because gaining an extra weighted grade in honors courses may no longer supercede their personal and academic interests and passions.

- **Science:** AP chemistry, AP biology and AP physics
- **Math:** Advanced Statistics, AP calculus and Honors trigonometry/pre-calculus
- **English:** Honors English 412, AP 413 British literature and Honors 312 American literature
- **Social Studies:** AP European history and AP American history
- **Foreign Language:** Levels 4 and 5.
- **Music:** AP Music Theory

2) Any grade C- or lower among the 5.0 weighted courses will revert to a 4.0 scale.

Rationale: We want to encourage students to take higher level courses, but students not gaining the academic achievements and learning desired are not demonstrating learning that is deserving of or commensurate with the weighted system.

3) We would like to lower our grading scale to a 94% A and adjust the top part of our grading scale accordingly.

(See the chart below that includes the current and proposed grading scale with the blue text indicating the differences from the current scale).

Rationale: We want to allow all students to benefit from the opportunity to receive higher grades but without lowering PHS's reputation for academic integrity. Thus, we ensured that lowering our top grade to a 94% still has PHS's grading scale higher than most

schools in the area as well as those in the state. Lastly, research revealed that most colleges today consider foremost a student’s strength of schedule during all four years and the actual, not weighted, grades attained in those courses when deciding whether to accept a student.

	Current	<i>Proposed</i>
A	96-100	<i>94-100</i>
A-	92-95	<i>90-93</i>
B+	89-91	<i>87-89</i>
B	86-88	<i>83-86</i>
B-	82-85	<i>80-82</i>
C+	78-81	<i>77-79</i>
C	74-77	<i>73-76</i>
C-	70-73	<i>70-72</i>
D+	67-69	67-69
D	64-66	64-66
D-	61-63	61-63
F	Below 61	Below 61

4) We would like to add a summa, magna and cum laude system to our current ranked system.

(Guidance, students and parents will still know their student’s ranking for college acceptance and scholarship purposes; however, the summa, magna and cum laude system of acknowledging a student’s academic achievement will be highlighted.)

Rationale: This prepares students for the reality of the system they will face in college, which is not based on student rank, rather on individual grade achievement. Also, this is likely to lessen honors’ students’ point gouging and raise individual motivation versus simply being motivated to beat the student ahead of them in rank. In addition, this acknowledges the academic excellence of students who are not able to take honors courses but still have extremely high grade point averages, ones that typically may have them ranked 100th in their class even though they earned predominantly “A”s throughout their high school career.