

# Uniform Grading Policy

State Board of Education

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# Summary of Work

- Work Group #1 outlines the pros and cons of 7 v. 10 point scale
- Conversion Chart to Work Group #1 & Superintendents
- Second Conversion Chart to Work Group #1
- Meeting with Commission on Higher Education
- Meeting with General Assembly members
- Final Recommendation of Work Group #1 to Superintendent Spearman

# Rationale for 10 Point Scale

- Gives South Carolina Students a fair opportunity to apply for admissions and scholarships
  - All surrounding States are on a 10 point scale
  - Lack of GPA conversions
- Provide continuity for military families and students
- Provides a seamless transition from high school to college outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate
  - Dual Credit
  - 10 point scale



# Grade Conversion Chart 10 Point Scale

## State Department's Objectives

- Examine the new 10 point scale and quality point conversion chart for GPAs
- Make a recommendation to State Board of Education to adopt a
  - 10 point grading scale in grades 9-12; and a
  - Quality point conversion chart to begin with the 2016-17 school year

# Tale of Two GPAs in South Carolina

## Uniform Grading Policy GPA

- Used in conjunction with the Conversion Chart
- Used to calculate HOPE, LIFE, and Palmetto Fellows scholarships
- Rewards students for taking more rigorous classes
- Used to calculate rank in class, honor graduates, valedictorian, etc.

## College 4.0 GPA

- Converts all courses a student takes back to the 4.0 scale
- Is used by colleges for admission for in- state and out-of-state students

# Student Example

## Student A

- From a North Georgia high school
- Applies to Clemson University
- Clemson equates all grades to 4.0 grading scale
- 92 = A = 4.0 in GPA

## Student B

- From the Low Country South Carolina
- Applies to Clemson University
- Clemson applies UGP for scholarship purposes
- Clemson equates all grades to 4.0 grading scale
- 92 = B = 3.0 in GPA

# Grade Conversion Chart

# Current Uniform Grading Scale

Numerical Average	Letter Grade	College Prep	Honors	AP/IB/ Dual Credit
100	A	4.875	5.375	5.875
99	A	4.750	5.250	5.750
98	A	4.625	5.125	5.625
97	A	4.500	5.000	5.500
96	A	4.375	4.875	5.375
95	A	4.250	4.750	5.250
94	A	4.125	4.625	5.125
93	A	4.000	4.500	5.000
92	B	3.875	4.375	4.875
91	B	3.750	4.250	4.750
90	B	3.625	4.125	4.625
89	B	3.500	4.000	4.500
88	B	3.375	3.875	4.375
87	B	3.250	3.750	4.250
86	B	3.125	3.625	4.125
85	B	3.000	3.500	4.000



# New 10 Point Conversion Chart

Grade in Course	CP Weighting	Honors Weighting	AP/IB Weighting
100	5	5.5	6
99	4.9	5.4	5.9
98	4.8	5.3	5.8
97	4.7	5.2	5.7
96	4.6	5.1	5.6
95	4.5	5	5.5
94	4.4	4.9	5.4
93	4.3	4.8	5.3
92	4.2	4.7	5.2
91	4.1	4.6	5.1
90	4	4.5	5
89	3.9	4.4	4.9
88	3.8	4.3	4.8
87	3.7	4.2	4.7
86	3.6	4.1	4.6
85	3.5	4	4.5
84	3.4	3.9	4.4
83	3.3	3.8	4.3
82	3.2	3.7	4.2
81	3.1	3.6	4.1
80	3	3.5	4

# How PowerSchool Determines GPA

1st

- Grades are entered in PowerSchool
- Grade Scale is determined by Course Section

2nd

- Grade Scale determines two values (weighted and unweighted quality points)
- Three values are permanently stored in PowerSchool (original grade and the two GPAs)

3rd

- Weighted and Unweighted GPAs are calculated “on the fly” and transferred to transcript
- Transcripts and GPAs are calculated when you make the request per what was stored

# Details of Implementing a 10 Point Scale

## PowerSchool

1. Lock and store all grades at the end of the 15-16 school year under the 7 point scale.
2. Enter and store summer school grades on the 7 point grade scale
3. After August 1, import 10 pt grade scale
4. Beginning with the 16-17 school year, implement the 10 point scale going forward for grades 9-12.
5. PowerSchool will store all grades and associated quality points going forward with the new grading scale.
6. At the conclusion of the 16-17 school year, PowerSchool will average the quality points stored on 7pt scale with the quality points on the 10 pt. scale to determine a GPA

# Phase in with 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Class

## Discussion

- PowerSchool will not accommodate a phase in due to how it processes GPAs for transcripts
- North Carolina did not phase in
- Student examples of why phasing in new scale could be problematic

# Impact on Lottery Scholarship Program

Items for General Assembly to Consider Based on  
Changes to Grading Scale

# Lottery Scholarships

- **HOPE Scholarship** – 3.0 GPA
  - \$2500 one time scholarship
- **LIFE** – 3.0 GPA; top 30% of class; 24 on ACT Composite Score or 1100 SAT
  - \$5000 scholarship annually if student maintains 3.0 GPA in college
- **Palmetto Fellows** – 3.5 GPA; top 6% of class; 27 on ACT Composite Score or 1200 on SAT
  - \$6700 or \$7500 if STEM major annually if student maintains 3.0 in college

# Impact of Students Earning a 3.0 ("B" average)

- 2013 **40,999** students would score "B" or better approximately **13,000** more students
- 2014 **41,588** students would score "B" or better approximately **12,700** more students
- 2015 **42,874** students would score "B" or better approximately **12,000** more students

# Impact to Lottery Funding

## Budget Neutral

- Using the past 3 years: Final 12<sup>th</sup> Grade GPAs
  - 2015: 30,858 students scored 3.0 or better on the 7 point grade scale; the GPA for the equivalent # of students to qualify for Hope/Life on the 10 point scale = **3.503**
  - 2014: 28,929 students scored 3.0 or better on the 7 point grade scale; the GPA for the equivalent # of students to qualify for Hope/Life on the 10 point scale = **3.504**
  - 2013: 27,963 students scored 3.0 or better on the 7 point grade scale; the GPA for the equivalent # of students to qualify for Hope/Life on the 10 point scale = **3.505**



# If General Assembly asks for a revenue-neutral phase in for Scholarships

- 10 Point scale has a higher top end only available for one year for current Juniors
- If you want to fund approximately the same number of students per year:
  - 2016-2017 cut should be 3.2
  - 2017-2018 cut should be 3.3
  - 2018-2019 cut should be 3.4
  - 2019-2020 cut should be 3.5

# Discussion of Conversion Chart

## Positive

- Presents least change to current conversion chart by minimally moving interval between each numeric average from .125 to .100
- Continues to reward students for higher averages in each grade range by issuing increasing quality points
- Should have minimal impact on LIFE and Fellows scholarship because other factors of rank and ACT/SAT are still discriminators

## Negative

- Raises the top end of the scale from 4.875 max on the CP column to 5.00 (creating more inflation)
- Doesn't reduce the granularity between each numeric value
- Doesn't diminish the .5 weighting for honors and 1.0 weighting for AP/IB
- Will have the greatest impact on HOPE scholarship qualifiers if 3.0 is not raised
- 3.5 (Palmetto Fellows requirement) = 85/B

# Preparation for Changes to UGP

# School Considerations

- What is impacted by this change?
  1. National Honor Society
  2. Beta Club
  3. Program of Study
  4. Student Handbooks

Are there other items to add to this list?

# Communications

- Local School Board
- Teachers: prior to the end of the year, reflected in grading practices/guidelines
- Students: course syllabus, beginning of the year expectations
- Parents/Community: letter home in final report cards this spring, beginning of the year packets, school newsletters, information posted on websites, school/district social media, SICs, PTOs

# Commission on Higher Education

- At Superintendent Spearman's suggestion, the SCDE will
  - Work with CHE to co-chair committees to examine the impact of the new scale on lottery scholarships; and
  - Will recommend including new measures such as WorkKeys to Hope and/or Life scholarship levels

# Discussion and Questions

# Recommendation

- State Board of Education approve the new 10 point grading scale for South Carolina Students and the corresponding GPA conversion chart for quality points