

Weighted GPA Proposal 2019

By the Grading and Reporting Subcommittee

Warms and Wonders

- What is a weighted GPA?
- How does a weighted GPA affect students?
- How does this proposal relate to the Souhegan Six and Mission Statement?
- What do faculty and students think?

AP/Dual Enrollment in a Standards Based System

- Full implementation of standards based scoring for the class of 2023
- Grade level standards are scored on a 1-4 scale
- Students are scored against grade level standards
- AP and Dual Enrollment course standards are above high school standards

Weighted GPA Proposal 2019

The subcommittee proposes to weight GPA of advanced placement (AP) and dual enrollment (college level) courses, whenever GPA is recalculated.

Why Might Students Take AP and Dual Enrollment Courses?

- Research indicates better student performance in college after taking AP in high school (NASSP)
- Raises standings in the college admission process and financial assistance (Sacks, NASSP)
- Students gain the experience of a college-like class before ever attending a university (Sacks)
- Some [if not most] colleges allow people to gain credit for their AP work (Sacks)
- If students can satisfactorily pass an AP exam and receive college credit, it prevents them from repeating the same material in college and could save on tuition
- There are financial assistance programs for AP test fees

(Dual Enrollment courses provide college credit and high school credit from the same class.)

What is a Weighted GPA?

- Different course types are weighted more heavily into the GPA calculation
- AP and dual enrollment can give your GPA a small increase
- Complements competency based curriculum (NASSP)
- 72% of high schools use weighted GPA (2018 Proposal, Dennis)

Schools Near us that use Weighted GPA

- Alvirne High School (Hudson)
- Academy of Science and Design
- Bedford High School
- Bishop Brady High School
- Bishop Guertin High School
- ConVal Regional High School
- Campbell High School
- Epping High School
- Exeter High School
- Goffstown High School
- Hollis Brookline High School
- Inter-Lakes High School
- John Stark Regional High School
- Laconia High School
- Littleton High School
- Londonderry High School
- Manchester High School West
- Merrimack High School
- Milford High School
- Moultonborough Academy
- Nashua High South
- Nashua High North
- Pembroke Academy
- Salem High School
- Sanborn Regional High School
- Sunapee High School
- White Mountains Regional High School
- Windham High School
- Winnacunnet High School
- Winnisquam Regional High School

Weighted GPA and the Souhegan Six

- “Respect and encourage the right to teach and the right to learn at all times.”
 - Souhegan desires to challenge all learners
 - AP and Dual-Enrollment courses provide a path to challenge the learner at a college level while at Souhegan
 - Weighted GPAs acknowledge the above grade level work of the learner
- “Be actively engaged in the learning; ask questions, collaborate, and seek solutions.”
 - AP and Dual-Enrollment courses require the learner to be self-motivated and engaged to succeed
- “Be responsible and accountable for their choices”
 - Students (and their parents) may have to “hear” they are not prepared for an AP class and respect the guidance of the faculty and staff OR suffer the consequences of a poor grade

Weighted GPA and the Mission Statement

“Souhegan High School aspires to be a community of learners born of respect, trust and courage.”

- “To support and engage an individual's unique gifts, passions, and intentions.”
 - This supports and engages students’ desire to learn advanced concepts.
- “To develop and empower the mind, body, and heart.”
 - AP and dual-enrollment courses help develop students’ minds and hearts through knowledge.
- “To challenge and expand the comfortable limits of thought, tolerance, and performance.”
 - The weighted GPAs encourage students to challenge their comfortable limits of thought, tolerance, and performance by providing a safe space for them to push themselves to take these courses without having to fear negatively affecting GPA
- “To inspire and honor the active stewardship of family, nation, and globe.”
 - Students are more competitive when pursuing opportunities beyond high school

Pros of a Weighted GPA

- “Strong evidence is found in favor of adding ...1 point for AP courses” (National Association of Secondary School Principals or NASSP)
- “Sizable impact on college admission and access to financial aid” (NASSP)
- Provides a weighted GPA for colleges that do not recalculate for admissions and/or scholarships (Dennis, Griesemer, Parents, Alumni)
- Better chance for students to receive more scholarship money (NASSP, Alumni, Parents, Cognard)
- Puts students in best light when online applications are filtered
 - Online applications have increased
 - 10,000 first-year applications in 2008 to more than 35,600 in 2018 (Clark)
 - Larger colleges and more selective colleges have more applications per admissions officer
 - Colleges with < 50% acceptance rate have over 900 applications per admissions officer (Clinedinst)
 - Colleges with 10,000 or more students have over 1,000 applications per admissions officer (Clinedinst)
 - Computers assist in filtering (Clark)

Pros of a Weighted GPA (continued)

- Seniors are fairly compared with other weighted high schools (School Profiles)
- Weighted GPAs encourage students to pursue college level courses (Cognard)
 - More accurate portrayal of student's ability to manage college level coursework while in high school (Clinedinst)
- AP and dual enrollment courses can demonstrate college readiness to admissions, in addition to SAT, ACT, etc. (Clinedinst)

Cons of a Weighted GPA

- Could cause over-enrollment in AP and dual enrollment courses (Herald)
- Students taking non-weighted classes might seem less serious (Herald)
- Benefits only students taking AP and Dual Enrollment
- Perceived “elitism” (2019 Staff Survey)

NH Principals Survey: Why Do Other Schools Weight Courses?

- The community wants weighted GPAs (Bedford, Hudson)
- Extra point allows the student to focus more on learning
- Graduates are fairly compared with other schools
- Helps with scholarships
- Incentivizes students to challenge themselves
- Weighted GPA determines Class Rank, even if unweighted on transcripts

Student Opinions

Pros:

- One Souhegan grad commented that they lost a \$40,000 scholarship at one school because large colleges often don't recalculate GPA (2018 Proposal)
- “ I feel like my GPA would have been higher and would have evenly matched my work ethic with the kids of other schools who have a similar schedule rigor but have a weighted GPA.” -SHS Senior (2018 Proposal)
- 67% of students thought weighted grades would benefit Souhegan students (2018 Proposal Survey of 170 students)

Cons:

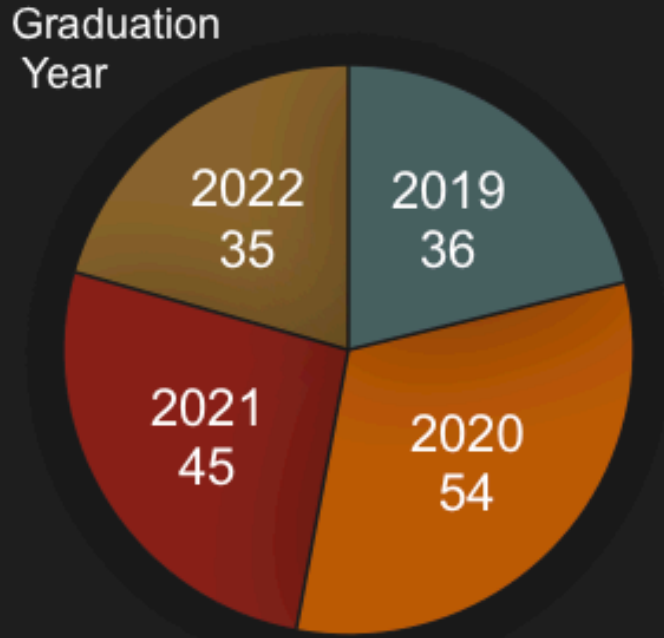
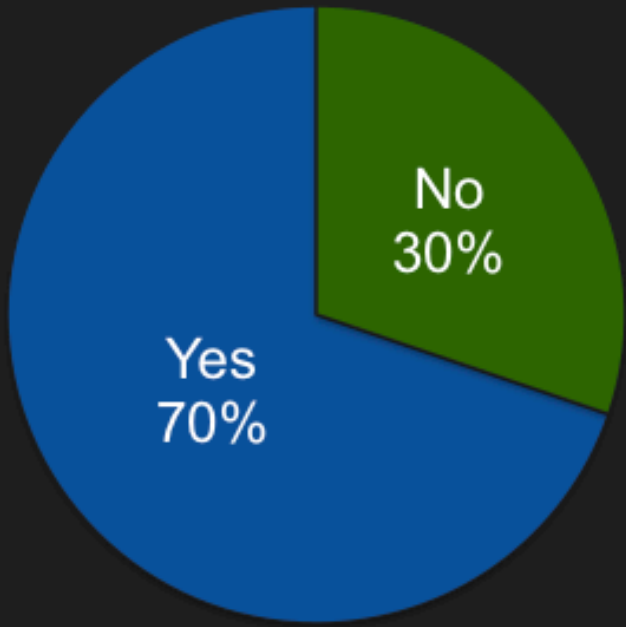
- Some colleges claim they undo your weights and redo it their way
- Students might take AP course for a reward and distract people who actually want to learn the content (2018 Proposal)
- Course selection should be about interest in content, not about wanting a good grade (2018 Proposal)

Staff Opinion

- Weighted GPAs could increase competition in the school's environment (2018 Proposal)
- Make some classes seem “more valuable” than others (2018 Proposal, 2019 Staff Survey)
- Not having a weighted GPA system puts our students at a disadvantage (2019 Survey)

2019 Student Survey (170 students, Spring 2019)

Would you be more likely to take AP classes, if your GPA was to receive weight?



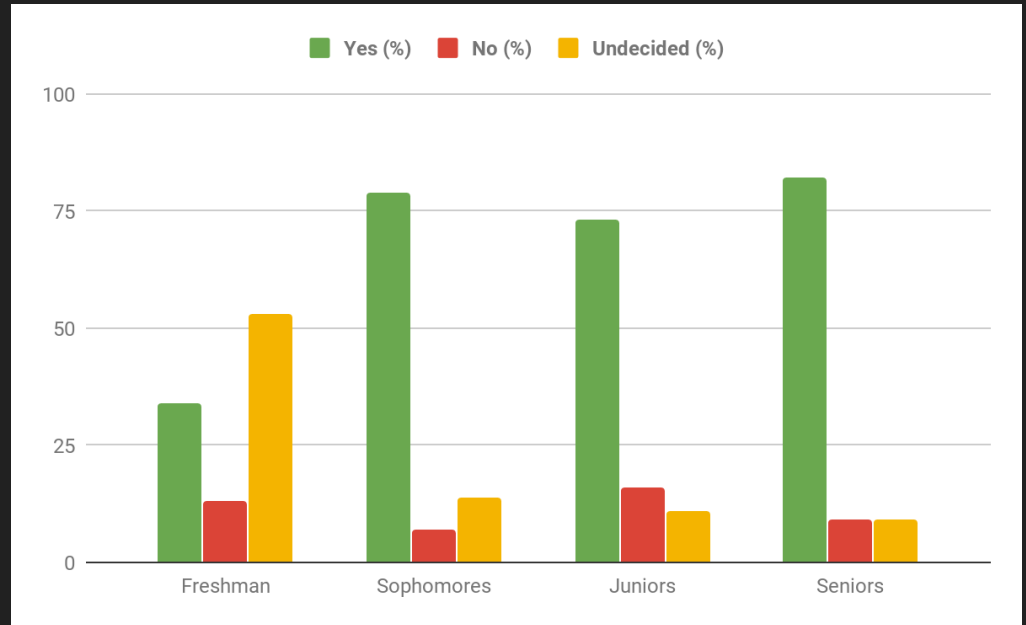
Only 43% of Class of 2016 graduates took an AP exam while at Souhegan (US News and World Report)

2018 Proposal Student Survey Results

(170 Students)

Would You Like a Weighted GPA at SHS?

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Undecided (%)
Freshman	34	13	53
Sophomores	79	7	14
Juniors	73	16	11
Seniors	82	9	9



Works Consulted

Weighted GPA Proposal Presentation, Community Council Meeting 2/12/2018

“Weighting for Recognition: Accounting for Advanced Placement and Honors Courses When Calculating High School Grade Point Average” by Philip Sadler and Robert Tai National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin Volume 91 Number 1 March 2007 pp. 5-32.

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School Profiles for 2018-2019: Academy for Science and Design, Bedford High, Hollis-Brookline High, John Stark Regional High, Londonderry High, Milford High, Moultonborough Academy, Nashua High North, Nashua High South, Windham High, Winnacunnet High

School Profiles for 2017-2018: Merrimack High School, ConVal Regional High School

School Profiles for 2016-2017: Bishop Guertin High

“BAE signs lease for new Manchester facility, adds hundreds of jobs,” WMUR.com, 4 Feb. 2019 (29 March 2019 <https://www.wmur.com/article/bae-signs-lease-for-new-manchester-facility-add-hundreds-of-jobs/2613353>)

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National Association Secondary School Principals, Policy Statements: Class Rank, GPA, Grading (31 March 2019 <https://www.nassp.org/policy-advocacy-center/nassp-position-statements/class-rank-gpa-and-grading>)

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