



# Academic Achievement

## CLASS RANKING HANDBOOK

As of 8.12.2025

# ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT HANDBOOK

## Policy Cross Reference Sheet

This handbook is an administrative procedure of the district and subject to policies adopted by the Board of Trustees. In the event of conflict between administrative procedures and Board policy, policy shall prevail.

The contents of this handbook relate to the following Board policies:

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# Introduction

## Philosophy

The Board values the development of all students' social and emotional learning and well-being. In addition, the Board values supporting the attainment of all seven Profile of a Graduate attributes. The Board also desires to honor and recognize graduates who have attained high academic excellence.

# Definitions

The **Class of 2026 and beyond** are represented by students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the 2022-23 school year and after.

A **campus of residence** is the school within the attendance boundary zone in which the student lives during the school week.

A **campus of attendance** is the school in which the student attends class during the school day in person or virtually.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)** is calculated by multiplying each semester grade achieved, excluding GPA-exempt courses, by the number of credits the course was worth, calculating the sum of these values with any additional weights and dividing by the total number of credits that were attempted.

A student's **class rank** is a measure of how a student's *GPA* compares to that of other students in the same graduating class.

**GPA-exempt courses** shall not be included when calculating a student's *GPA* or class rank. *GPA-exempt courses* are specified third- and fourth-year elective courses that encourage special skills and interests. *GPA-exempt courses defined by Fort Bend ISD are in the current District course guide.*

A **one-time option** is a discretionary transfer for students that have attended a high school for at least two consecutive years or for a student's last year of elementary, middle, or high school.

**Inter-District Transfers** are defined as students that transfer from another district to Fort Bend ISD if this is permitted in policy and/or by agreements with other districts.

**Intra-District Transfers** are defined as students that transfer from a Fort Bend ISD campus of residence to another Fort Bend ISD campus. This includes employee and special circumstances transfers.

A **Program of Choice** is defined as a program with specialized offerings for which students must apply and be accepted. This includes but is not limited to academy programs, Early College High School, etc.

A **semester** for honor graduate purposes (Valedictorian & Salutatorian) is considered only if it is a traditional semester. Traditional semesters only occur in the Fall or Spring of the school year. Summer is not considered a traditional semester.

## Class Rank System

The district shall record a Weighted 100-point scale, weighted 4.0 scale, and the unweighted 4.0 GPA on student transcripts. All courses recorded on the academic achievement record (high school transcript) shall count toward GPA and class rank using the grades received, with the exception of courses taken on a GPA-exempt basis and, beginning with the class of 2029, any credits earned through virtual learning beyond the first two. These courses shall be weighted by category when calculating GPA. Courses taken in fulfillment of an endorsement shall not be excluded from the GPA.

Local graduate honors, such as Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, and Cum Laude, do not supersede class rank for the purposes of the Top 10% state law.

## Class Rank Calculation

### Graduating Class of 2024 and Beyond

Starting with the *Class of 2024*, class rank shall be calculated for all students in 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Rank and quartile will not be placed on a student's transcript; therefore, students will receive their rank and quartile separately from their transcript (See Exhibit B). Rank and Quartile will be available as follows:

- Sophomores will receive rank in January of their sophomore year.
- Juniors will receive their rank in September, January, and June of their junior year.
- Seniors will receive their rank in September, January, and June of their senior year. For commencement purposes only, rank occurs in April of the Senior year.

Fort Bend ISD shall provide the TEA "NOTIFICATION FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR AUTOMATIC COLLEGE ADMISSION" to students in the top 10% as directed by the Texas Education Agency. Students will receive notification of automatic admissions, and their class rank as determined the day rank is calculated. These TEA notifications will be shared with Juniors beginning in January of their junior year, and then for seniors in September and January of their senior year.

## Top Ten Percent Rule

Juniors and seniors with a class rank in the top ten percent will be notified of their qualification for automatic admissions as required by law no later than the 14<sup>th</sup> school day following the end of the first semester.

## Transfer Grades

When a student transfers with grades for properly documented and eligible courses, the district shall assign a weight to those grades based on the categories and grade weight system used by the district. [See the Grading and Reporting Handbook.](#)

## Early Graduation

Early graduates shall be ranked with the class from which they graduate. Calculations for *GPA* and class rank for three-year graduates shall be based upon the grade point scale and procedures for determining rank for the senior class with which they graduate. Students in the graduating classes of 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027 participating in a *Program of Choice* shall be held to the same class ranking standards of being ranked with their zoned campus regardless of early graduation year.

## Graduation Speakers

Graduation speakers shall be based on neutral criteria designed to select the students who best exhibit the attributes of the Profile of a Graduate. Please see Policy FMH (LOCAL) for more information.

## Students Participating in a Program of Choice

A *Program of Choice* is defined as a program with specialized offerings for which students must apply and be accepted. If a student attends a campus other than their campus of residence, the campus the student attends may be designated as the campus of accountability if the student meets all criteria set by TEA annually for inclusion in the accountability subset of students at each campus. Students in a Program of Choice shall be ranked with the students at the high school where they physically attend and receive instruction.

## Middle School Gifted and Talented Academy

*Program of Choice* reporting would begin with students entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade at the Gifted and Talented (GT) Academy during the 2020-21 school year and beyond. All GT Academy students' state assessment data reporting will be on the *campus the student attends*. (Policy ED [LOCAL])

## Qualification for Valedictorian or Salutatorian

A student must reside within the same attendance boundary for their final four semesters of high school to qualify as valedictorian or salutatorian. To be eligible for top honors, valedictorian or salutatorian, a student must meet the additional eligibility requirements including completion of high school in no fewer than eight semesters, and continuous enrollment in the same high school in the district for the four semesters immediately preceding graduation.

## Students Who are Redirected to a Specific Campus Due to Cap and Overflow from an Over-Utilized Campus

Students impacted by Cap and Overflow, from their currently zoned High School, are ranked with students at the Cap and Overflow school they attend.

## Program of Choice Certificate of Completion

Students in a *Program of Choice* shall receive a certificate of completion with their diploma from the campus of attendance that will also indicate the *program of choice* in which the student participated. (See Exhibit C)

## Grade Weighting Beginning with Students Who Entered Grade 9 in the 2019-20 School Year

Any student entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2019-20 and beyond shall have all courses weighted as follows:

Grade range	AP, Beyond AP, Dual Credit, IB, and Dual Enrollment	AAC/Pre-AP, Pre- IB, and Honors	On-level course (not weighted)
90-100+	5	4.5	4
80-89	4	3.5	3
70-79	3	2.5	2
Below 70	0	0	0

Beginning with the school year 2021-22 and beyond, Pre-AP will be known as Advanced Academic Course (AAC). When a college or scholarship application requires the 100-point scale, the cumulative *GPA* shall be converted to a 4-point scale. The following is the conversion used for the weighted 4-point scale:

Category	Weight
AP Level, Beyond AP, Dual Credit, IB, and Dual Enrollment	+10 points to the semester
AAC/Pre-AP level, Pre-IB, Honors	+5 points to the semester
Regular/On-level courses	Not weighted

# Honor Graduates Beginning with Students Who Enter Grade 9 in the 2015-16 School Year

Any student considered to be an honor graduate shall meet all graduation requirements and shall complete either the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation program or the foundation program with at least one endorsement.

For commencement ceremony purposes only, cumulative *GPA* is used in designating honor graduates and shall be calculated at the end of the third nine-week grading period of the senior year. The eligible student with the highest-class *rank* shall be named valedictorian; the eligible student with the second-highest rank in class shall be named salutatorian. In the instance of a Weighted *GPA* tie after calculation to four decimal places, the district shall recognize all students involved in the tie as sharing the honor and title of honor graduates. The highest-ranking student reported to TEA is determined based on the June final rank calculation following graduation.

Honor	Criterion
Valedictorian	Highest Cumulative <i>GPA</i>
Salutatorian	Second-Highest Cumulative <i>GPA</i>
Summa Cum Laude	Cumulative <i>GPA</i> = 97 or higher
Magna Cum Laude	Cumulative <i>GPA</i> = 96-93
Cum Laude	Cumulative <i>GPA</i> = 92-90

Students entering a *Program of Choice in the fall of the 2024-25 school year* or on an intra-district transfer are eligible to be named valedictorian or salutatorian if the following are true:

- The student did not withdraw from a campus where the student attended on a transfer and enroll at the student's campus of primary residence within the four consecutive semesters immediately preceding graduation.
- The student did not transfer from the campus of primary residence to another campus within the four consecutive semesters immediately preceding graduation.
- The student met additional requirements for valedictorian and salutatorian by completing no fewer than eight semesters. The student must also be continuously enrolled in the same Fort Bend ISD high school for the four semesters immediately preceding graduation.

# EXHIBIT A: Sample Texas Education Agency Notification Letter to Top 10% Students

## Notification of Eligibility for Automatic College Admission for Students Eligible to Enter College in 2026

This notice confirms that pending the satisfaction of all applicable requirements (see below), \_\_\_\_\_ will be eligible for automatic college admission.

A student is eligible for automatic admission to a college or university as an undergraduate student if the applicant earned a grade point average in the **top 10 percent** of the student's high school graduating class (Texas Education Code, §51.803). If an eligible student is applying as an undergraduate to the University of Texas at Austin in the summer/fall 2025 or spring 2026, the applicant must earn a grade point average in the **top 5 percent** of the student's high school graduating class. The applicant in either case must also:

- (1) earn the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program;  
or
- (2) satisfy ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT assessment or earn on the SAT assessment a score of at least 1,500 out of 2,400 or the equivalent.

In accordance with Title 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), §5.5(e), high school rank for students seeking automatic admission to a general academic teaching institution on the basis of class rank is determined and reported as follows.

- (1) Class rank shall be based on the end of the 11th grade, middle of the 12th grade, or at high school graduation, whichever is most recent at the application deadline.
- (2) The top 10 percent of a high school class shall not contain more than 10 percent of the total class size.
- (3) The student's rank shall be reported by the applicant's high school or school district as a specific number out of a specific number total class size.
- (4) Class rank shall be determined by the school or school district from which the student graduated or is expected to graduate.

An applicant who does not satisfy the course requirements is considered to have satisfied those requirements if the student completed the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program that was available to the student but was unable to complete the remainder of the coursework solely because courses were unavailable to the student at the appropriate times in the student's high school career as a result of circumstances not within the student's control.

### To qualify for automatic admission an applicant must:

- (1) submit an application before the deadline established by the college or university to which the student seeks admission;
- (2) meet all curriculum requirements for admission established by the college or university to which the student seeks admission; and
- (3) provide a high school transcript or diploma that indicates whether the student has satisfied or is on schedule to satisfy the requirements of the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program or the portion of the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program that was available to the student.

Colleges and universities are required to admit an applicant for admission as an undergraduate student if the applicant is the child of a public servant who was killed or sustained a fatal injury in the line of duty and meets the minimum requirements, if any, established by the governing board of the college or university for high school or prior college-level grade point average and performance on standardized tests.

My signature below constitutes my acknowledgement that I have been provided with a copy of the notification of automatic college admission and explanation of eligibility for automatic college admission.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian Date

# Exhibit B: Sample Rank Letter for All Fort Bend ISD Students

## Rank/Quartile Notification

Dear Fort Bend Independent School District (FBISD) Student,

To aid in your after high school planning, FBISD policy EIC Local provides that you receive certain class ranking information. This official notification of your class ranking information may be provided to colleges of your choice or submitted with scholarship applications.

The information below is your quartile and class rank as a specific numerical rank out of the specific total class size as determined on the day rank is calculated. Additionally, FBISD's ranking policy, EIC Local, indicates that rank and quartile will be provided to a student separate from the transcript and will not be included on the transcript by FBISD as articulated in the rank policy EIC Local.

For the Class of 2026 and beyond, students in a Program of Choice or on an intradistrict transfer, are ranked with the students at the high school where they receive instruction.

FBISD is providing this official notification of this student's class rank and quartile that will allow students the ability to provide this information to the colleges of their choice and the opportunity to submit this information with scholarship applications. All ranks are subject to address verification.

We wish you the best in your future pursuits.

## Student Rank Information

**Ranking & Total Students:** of

**Quartile:** 1, 2, 3, or 4

**Calculated on:** 09/21/2023

Thank you,



Registrar

# EXHIBIT C: Sample Certificate of Completion

## Certificate of Completion

FORT BEND INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PROUDLY PRESENTS THIS CERTIFICATE TO

For successfully completing the Medical Science Academy  
Program of Choice 2020-2024

*Dr. Westbrook*

*Dr. Pilar Westbrook*  
Executive Director of  
Social-Emotional Learning

*Jennifer Chadwick*

*Jennifer Chadwick*  
Director of Enrichment  
Programs

