

April 14, 2015

TO: NC 2015-16 High School Parents

FROM: June St. Clair Atkinson *JSA*

### **STATEWIDE 10-POINT GRADING SCALE**

For high school students, grades and other academic measures become very important as they plan for their future after graduation. Over the past few years, North Carolina parents, students and local superintendents have petitioned the State Board of Education (SBE) to require a statewide standard 10-point grading scale for all high school students. Those advocating for this change in state policy noted that North Carolina school districts differed in their grading scales and that students would benefit from having a standard 10-point scale. This transition to a 10-point scale helps students who move from one district to another and puts North Carolina students in a more competitive position as they apply for admission to out-of-state colleges and universities.

#### **Standard Grading Scale Approved**

In October 2014, the State Board approved a standard 10-point grading scale to begin with the 2015-16 school year for all high school students. This scale will not include “pluses” or “minuses.” Grades from prior years will not be altered retroactively.

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#### **Grades and Grade-Point Average Calculations**

Local school districts are required to follow the new scale at the high school level (grades 9-12). Although it is not required at grades K-8, local school districts may use the scale in lower grades if desired. Under the new scale, grades and grade point average calculations will be applied as follows:

- A: 90-100 = 4.0
  - B: 80-89 = 3.0
  - C: 70-79 = 2.0
  - D: 60-69 = 1.0
  - F: < 59 = 0.0
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**New Quality Point Standards  
Begin in 2015-16  
with Ninth Graders**

In addition to the grade scale change, new standards for quality points also take effect in the 2015-16 school year. These new standards are the outcome of a study directed by the NC General Assembly and subsequent actions by the UNC Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges. The new quality point standards only affect ninth graders in the fall of 2015-16 and all students entering high school after that year according to the effective policy date adopted by the State Board of Education. This change does not affect students who will be in grades 10, 11 or 12 in 2015-16.

The new quality points standard will provide an additional .5 quality point to Honors courses and 1.0 quality point to Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, community college courses, or four-year university or college courses taken in high school.

This eliminates discrepancies between AP/IB and community college or college/university courses and quality points and provides the same additional quality point to all college-level coursework.

For example, a student who earns an A in an AP course would receive a weighted 5.0 grade for that particular course. A student who earns an A in an Honors course would receive a weighted 4.5 grade.

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**Questions**

The North Carolina State Board of Education is committed to helping all students graduate high school prepared for success in college and careers. This recent policy change is in line with this goal as it will make grading scales more consistent across the state and will enable North Carolina students to better compete for admission to colleges and universities across the country. If you any have questions about the new statewide standard grading scale and how it affects your student, please contact your high school counselor.

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JSA:mw

c: LEA Superintendents  
High School Principals