

# Weighted GPA

Board Subcommittee Findings  
MBUSD Board Workshop  
April 1, 2015

## 3 Committee Meetings

- CCC counselors
- Guidance counselors
- Teachers
- Parents
- Principal and Vice Principal
- Outside college counseling and testing professionals

# Comparisons

- **9 of 11 local schools weight GPAs**
  - Torrance (4), RUHS, PV, Peninsula, ES, CC
  - Santa Monica – Malibu (2) does not.
  - Valedictorian, 5 weighted, 4 unweighted
  - Most weighted AP & Honors courses
- **3 of 5 non-local ,similar schools weight GPAs**
  - San Marino, La Canada, Palo Alto Gunn weight
  - South Pasadena, Palo Alto HS do not weight
- **4 of 5 local privates weight GPAs**
  - Loyola, Marymount, Chadwick, Vistamar
  - Da Vinci does not weight

# College Admissions

- College admissions recalculate GPA based on unique priorities and knowledge about the high school students attend
- **We have had no evidence, anecdotal or otherwise, that providing an unweighted GPA affects the admissions process**

## Merit Scholarships

- These decisions are typically made in the Financial Aid rather than Admissions departments
- Using Naviance data since 2009, MCHS CCC counselors assessed the 77 schools MCHS students apply to most
- Of those that offered merit awards, 8 responded that they do not recalculate for merit decisions

## MCHS Data on Non-weighting Universities (Merit Scholarships Only: 2009-2014)

University	Applicants	Acceptances	Enrolled
Alabama	77	60	7
Colorado State	122	93	13
Colorado – Boulder	654	501	98
Hofstra	73	60	4
Indiana (Bloomington)	238	164	28
Miami (Ohio)	80	51	5
Oregon	592	440	64
Texas (Austin)	198	58	22

## Possible Impacts of Weighting Grades

- Increase an already stressful, competitive environment?
- Lead students to leave advanced electives in favor of weighted courses?
- Impact the valedictorian process?
- Encourage a student to try an AP or Honors course they may not have?
- Encourage a student to take on too many AP/ Honors courses?

## Research: Is Weighting an Incentive?

- *The AP Arms Race: Is Grade Weighting to Blame?* – UTD Texas Schools Project
  - Goal – Determine if weighting provides incentive for disadvantaged students to take one or more AP or honors courses. And if weighting led to “over consumption” of AP and honors courses.
- Conclusion: **“At the end of the day, grade weights are not so much an incentive as a reward.”**
  - “Consideration of AP participation in college admissions provides a substantial external incentive for students to participate in such courses regardless of grade weights used by the high school.”

## How to Weight?

- AP Only
- Honors – All or UC-approved honors only?
- Accelerated
- Transferable college courses
- UC method – grade C or higher
  - Summer pre 10<sup>th</sup> through summer pre 12<sup>th</sup>
  - A-G courses up to 8 semesters with no more than 4 semesters in 10<sup>th</sup> grade; AP, H, IB, college

## Weighting Inflation?

High School	AP /Honors/Accelerated Courses
MCHS	19
San Marino	21
Redondo Union	24
Palos Verdes	42
Peninsula	50
El Segundo	12
Culver City	16
Gunn (Palo Alto)	31

## What About Valedictorian?

- Option 1:
  - Keep Valedictorian as an unweighted recognition.  
Students with 4.0 unweighted honored as valedictorian.
- Option 2:
  - Move away from Valedictorian, and towards a collegiate recognition:
    - Summa Cum Laude – 4.0 and above (Weighted)
    - Magna Cum Laude – 3.75 to 3.99 (Weighted)
    - Cum Laude – 3.50 to 3.74 (Weighted)

## Next Steps

- Hear Public Input at Tonight's Workshop
- The Superintendent will prepare Recommendation for May 20 Board Meeting
- Prepare PowerSchool system for the possibility of weighted grades in 2015-16
- Gather Final Input from Subcommittee
- Board will take action on May 20.