



**Office of the Superintendent**  
Billings Public Schools  
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Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

During the past few years, Billings Public Schools and community stakeholders came together to design and implement new valedictorian protocols and a weighted grading system. While there has been tremendous success with this, there have also been a few unintended outcomes with the weighted grading system. Most challenging were the three years (2015-2018) when our students were in transition from one system to the other.

Starting with the 2018-2019 school year, all of our students have participated in a weighted system their entire high school career. Therefore, with the graduating class of 2019, BPS will utilize the weighted grade point average (GPA). This means:

- The weighted GPA will be displayed in PowerSchool.
- Class rank/percentile will only be calculated based upon the weighted GPA.
- Since some colleges and/or scholarships may request or prefer an unweighted GPA, transcripts will continue to show the unweighted GPA to help ensure accuracy. The unweighted class rank/percentile will no longer show on the transcript.
- The weighted GPA and class rank/percentile will be reported by all of our high schools for all college application and scholarship purposes (i.e. the Common Application, etc.). The one exception would be the MUS Scholarship, as we have analyzed the reporting and scoring process to ensure our students' chances of receiving the MUS scholarship are more favorable when unweighted GPAs are reported.
- GPA calculations will be rounded to the nearest hundredths (0.01) on the BPS transcript.

Students who wish to be considered for valedictorian status must still meet valedictorian specific criteria:

- The student with the highest weighted GPA after eight semesters of high school coursework will be deemed valedictorian. For the purposes of valedictorian determination, the GPA will not be rounded.
- In the case of a tie, multiple valedictorians will be recognized.
- In order to maintain a level playing field, all students vying for valedictorian must earn at least 24 credits.

We continue to encourage students to challenge themselves with rigorous coursework that meets their current educational needs while also properly preparing them for their post-graduation plans. If you have specific questions about how this may impact your student, please contact your school counselor or principal for assistance. We appreciate your continued positive support as we continually strive to ensure our students are able to fulfill their academic goals during their time as a student with Billings Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Greg Upham  
Superintendent