

Class Ranking

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Class of 2025 and Beyond

Cum Laude Recognition vs. Valedictorian/Salutatorian

In lieu of a valedictorian and salutatorian, ECA will adopt a cum laude recognition for the class of 2025 and beyond. These honors, along with graduation rank, are determined at the end of the first semester of the 12th grade year (7 semesters) so students will have this information for their college application processes.

Additional Cum Laude Requirements

- Eligible candidates for these top honors must demonstrate exemplary character and have been enrolled on or before the first day of school their junior year.
- Should academic achievement or conduct deteriorate the second semester of the senior year, these honors may be revoked.

Cum Laude Levels

<i>Level</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>GPA</i>	<i>Additional Requirements</i>
Cum Laude	With Honors	3.5-3.7	No failing semester grades
Magna Cum Laude	With High Honors	3.8-3.89	No failing semester grades
Summa Cum Laude	With Highest Honors	3.89-4.0	No failing semester grades Earn Honors Diploma (guidelines set forth by ODE)

Grading Scale

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Numerical Scale</u>	<u>GPA</u>
A+	99-100	4.0
A	94-98	4.0
A-	92-93	3.7
B+	90-91	3.3
B	85-89	3.0
B-	83-84	2.7
C+	81-82	2.3
C	76-80	2.0
C-	74-75	1.7
D+	72-73	1.3
D	67-71	1.0
D-	65-66	0.7
F	0-64	---

Ranking

- As some college scholarships are based upon rank, students will still be ranked in this new system.
- Students who earn Summa Cum Laude, will be ranked first, and then all remaining students will be ranked.
- Rankings will be included on the transcript.
- Students are ranked every semester beginning Freshman year through the first semester of Senior year.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why has ECA made changes to the valedictorian/salutatorian policy?

Valedictorian and Salutatorian is a system that recognizes two students for their academic accomplishments. Historically, one or more students who have also accomplished great things academically go unrecognized. The race for valedictorian and salutatorian is a close race every year, and sometimes the GPA determination is within thousandths of a point. ECA wants to provide a system where those students are recognized as well.

What is a Laude System?

A Laude System is a way to recognize academic achievements in graduates. It is modeled after the college model of honoring its graduates.

Why did ECA decide to use the Laude system?

The purpose of adopting the Laude System is to encourage students to choose rigorous courses, decrease unnecessary competition between classmates and inspire students to take courses that they may not have chosen to take under the old system.

When will the Laude system changes go into effect?

The changes will take place with the class of 2025 and beyond. It does not affect the class of 2022-2024.

How long have these changes been considered? Who was involved?

These changes have been under consideration for two years. A committee of high school teachers and administrators met to look for solutions. We then took the recommendation to the Student Advisory Council and the Parent Advisory Council for additional feedback. Students were strongly in favor of the proposed changes because they keep an emphasis on rigor but reduce competition between students.

How will senior commencement speakers be determined?

The senior class president and the chaplain will be the senior commencement speakers. Valedictorian and salutatorian will continue to speak for the classes of 2022-2024.

Will the Laude System drive students to take less rigorous classes to ensure a higher GPA?

We do not believe so. The Laude System fulfills the Board Policy standard, “[Students] are academically prepared for God’s calling in their life, including competitiveness for entrance into their top choices of colleges, universities and other post-secondary pursuits.” A student who takes a rigorous class load and earns mostly A’s and B’s will be a stronger candidate for college admission than one who takes all regular classes and earns A’s and B’s. This is discussed with parents and students on a regular basis as they create their course schedule. We are not afraid to encourage a student to take a more difficult class if we believe they are qualified to take it.

What about scholarships? Don't some scholarship criteria include class rank?

A student's class rank will still be included on a student's final transcript. This will allow students to apply for scholarships where monies are determined by class rank. Many colleges also use the student's ACT scores to determine scholarships, and we will focus on helping students improve these scores to create eligibility for additional scholarships.

Why is ECA no longer using a weighted GPA?

A weighted GPA takes into account how challenging a class is while an unweighted GPA does not. However, that weighted adjustment oftentimes gives a student a false sense of security. Because high schools across the country use differing policies to determine a student's GPA, colleges must come up with a way to compare students fairly and accurately. Therefore, college admissions specialists will unweight a GPA, recalculating it on their own scale. We want students to focus on the rigor of the class vs. the weight of it.

How will a college know that the course I took was “rigorous”?

Any classes that are rigorous in nature are marked as “honors” or “AP” on the student’s transcript. College classes are listed under the college they were taken at on the student’s transcript. Honors courses are also included in the school profile that is sent to prospective colleges with the student’s transcript.

What are colleges looking for in student applications?

Colleges tell ECA they look for four things in students: good grades in high school, rigorous classes, high college entrance exam scores, and extracurricular, co-curricular and leadership activities (this includes church, community service, band/choir, clubs, etc.)

Questions? Email Mrs. Kidder:
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