

THE NATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER ON THE GIFTED AND TALENTED SURVEY

WEIGHTED GRADES

1. Do you have a system of weighted grades for your high school students (9-12)?
 Yes
 No
2. If so, what kinds of classes do you weight?
 Honors classes (9-12)
 Advanced Placement classes (11-12)
 Other(s): Please explain.
3. If honors classes, how do you define “honors”?
 Use of a differentiated curriculum
 Use of enrichment activities
 Use of additional reading
 Other(s): Please explain.
4. How does the system of weighted grades work?
 Give 5.0 for an “A” on a 4.0 scale
 Give extra credits to students (If a course is worth five credits per semester, then a weighted course is worth more. If so, how much more? _____)
 Other(s): Please explain.
5. What are the positive effects of this system?
 Higher acceptance rates into colleges/universities
 Higher response by the more prestigious colleges/universities
 More scholarship moneys for students
 Better self-esteem among students
 More students taking weighted courses
 The top students in the graduation pool taking weighted courses
 Other(s): Please explain.
6. What are the negative effects of this system?
 Greater stress among students
 Students at the lower end of the academic spectrum left out of the process
 Students at school becoming tracked into “those who take these courses” and “those who can’t or don’t”
 Greater parental pressures
 Greater pressure from colleges/universities
 Students taking too many weighted courses in a given semester
 Charges of elitism.

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WAIVING CLASSES

1. Do you allow students to “waive” certain classes in your high school?
 Yes
 No
_____ Grade Level(s)
2. How do you define “waiving” classes?
 Students do not have to take a class at all
 Students do not have to take a class but must fulfill class objectives
 Students do not have to take a class but must take the final examination students would take in class
 Students must present a portfolio or demonstration of competence on class material
 Other(s): Please explain.
3. Do you have a formal system/policy for waiving classes?
 Yes
 No
4. If “yes,” is the formal system/policy available for?
 Gifted only
 All students
5. If a student waives a class, does s/he generate credit for the class?
 Yes
 No
6. If “yes,” under what circumstances?
 Only if the student fulfills the class objectives
 Only if the student completes a final exam
 Only if the class is prerequisite for a higher-level class
 All classes that are waived generate credit
 No classes waived generate credit.
7. Who makes the decision to waive a class?
 The principal or associate principal
 The department chairperson
 The gifted facilitator
 A committee
 A district-office administrator
 Other(s): _____

8. Do you have quite a number of students who decide to apply for waiving?
 Yes
 No
9. If “yes,” then define “number”:
 Half the students eligible or more
 One-fourth to one-third of the eligible students
 One-tenth of the students eligible
 Fewer than 5% of the eligible students
 Fewer than two students a year.
10. Do you waive district-level required classes?
 Yes
 No
11. If “yes,” could a student in the following categories waive a class?
 A cross-country team member waive PE requirement
 Yes
 No
 A politically-active student waive “Citizenship Issues”
 Yes
 No
 A high academic and college-bound, focused student waive classes like “Career Education” to take more “academic” subjects
 Yes
 No
 Other(s): Please explain.
12. Do students who waive classes tend to take more elective classes?
 Yes
 No
13. If “no,” then do students take more study halls or work-study?
 Yes
 No
14. Have you found waiving classes a successful way to motivate students to get out of high school more quickly?
 Yes
 No
15. Do you have any difficulty with college-entrance requirements if a class has been waived?
 Yes
 No

Cognard, A. M. (1996). *The case for weighting grades and waiving classes for gifted and talented students* (RM96226). University of Connecticut, The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.
<https://nrcgt.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/953/2015/04/rm96226.pdf>

16. If “yes,” in what way(s)?
- Colleges/universities regard waiving as problematic
 - Colleges/universities require make-up classes
 - Colleges/universities judge entrance status by completion of all courses
 - Other(s): Please explain.
17. If you were in charge of your high school, would you recommend your institution waive classes?
- Yes
 - No