

Glassboro Public Schools



MEMO

To: Dr. Mark Silverstein

From: Danielle Sochor, Chief Academic Officer

Date: 12/13/17

Re: Weighted credits for Rowan Academy students

Several students at GHS who participate in the Rowan Academy have brought to our attention an issue with weighted grades. Presently, GHS students who attend classes at Rowan receive HS credits, but the credits do not carry any weight and are GPA neutral. The students have made arguments that their weights from Rowan Academy classes should carry some additional weight. Currently, students taking honors courses receive a 2% weight, while students in AP classes receive a 10% weight. Below, we have considered implications for adding weights to these courses.

Table 1

Implications for assigning weights to RA courses

Benefits	Problems
-Students who achieve high grades at Rowan will receive boosts to their GPAs.	-Low grades at Rowan will result in lower GPAs, under the presumption that courses taken at Rowan are more rigorous.
-Students are awarded for going above and beyond—receive both college credits and weight for GPA.	-Is this double dipping?
-The weight would be commensurate to the weight use for AP classes.	-How should these courses be weighted if a policy change were adopted? Currently, honors courses are weighted at 2% and AP courses are at 10%. -Must ascribe the same weight to all courses at Rowan. Is Mechanical Engineering equivalent to Art History?

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-Possible union issue: If students begin deciding to take RCGC or RA courses in lieu of HS Requirements at GHS, then courses at GHS will likely shrink or worse, disappear.

-Possible equity issue (students whose parents can afford more courses)

-It's unclear how these changes would be phased in. It would be difficult if not impossible to do before the class of 2022.*

*Of the 16 HSs in Gloucester County, only one, Deptford, weights grades at 10% for classes taken at RCGC.

*Would be impossible to phase this in this year. Would need to begin with class of 2022. Students are requesting this change be made before that time, beginning with the class of 2018—also requesting a 10% GPA weight.

Recommendation and Rationale: We recommend that no changes be made to the existing program. The Rowan Academy is designed to give students valuable learning opportunities, to take collegiate courses and to experience the rigors of college. That experience and opportunity is what has attracted students (not only from Glassboro but also from other districts) to participate in the Academy and we believe the benefit to students is substantial already in its current state. We believe that to weight Rowan Academy courses would undermine the real intent of the program, would act as a sort of double benefit (in that students already receive the benefit of taking classes at Rowan University), and may even deter some students from challenging themselves to a college course.