



# **SHEBOYGAN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*Learning Today. Leading Tomorrow.*

## **Sheboygan Area School District Frequently Asked Questions about the Laude System for the Graduating Class of 2022 and Beyond**

### **What is the Laude System?**

The purpose of the Laude System is to recognize students for the rigor of their academic program as well as their success in that program. The Laude System referred to throughout this document is specific to the Sheboygan Area School District.

The Sheboygan Area School District Laude System is based upon a student's cumulative weighted Grade Point Average (GPA) which is calculated using point values associated with basic, regular, and honors courses that a student takes. (As outlined in Policy 5421 - Grading) The weighted GPA determines which Laude recognition level a student receives at graduation.

### **What will the Laude System do?**

The Laude System will be used to recognize students at graduation, which will replace class rank and the existing Valedictorian/Salutatorian designation.

### **When will the Laude System go into place?**

The Laude System was approved by the Board of Education on May 22, 2018, and will begin with the graduating class of 2022 and each graduating class thereafter. It does not affect the graduating classes of 2019 (current seniors), 2020 (current juniors), and 2021 (current sophomores).

### **What is the overall purpose of the Laude System?**

The primary and overriding purpose for implementing a Laude System is to encourage rigor in student coursework to prepare students for the next step after high school. It decreases unnecessary competition between classmates and increases students' academic options. The addition of the Laude System and the concurrent elimination of the existing class rank system will have a positive impact on students.

### **Will all course grades be included in the Grade Point Average (GPA)?**

Under our previous grading policy, not all student coursework completed counted toward his/her GPA. Under the new Laude System, all coursework will be counted towards a student's GPA.

### **Under the new Laude System, is GPA still calculated based on the 25 credits with the highest weighted grade points?**

No. Under the Laude System, a student's GPA calculation is based upon all courses taken and grades earned.

### **What are the Laude recognition levels?**

Summa Cum Laude: 5.300+

Magna Cum Laude: 5.000 - 5.299

Cum Laude: 4.600 - 4.999

**If class rank is not provided on most college applications, will it hurt our students' chances to be accepted into college?**

Class rank is no longer required for college applications. Colleges and universities use a more holistic approach, looking at criteria such as GPA, coursework, ACT score, letters of recommendation, participation in co-curricular activities, etc. to evaluate students. According to the NACAC Admission Trends Surveys, 2006 through 2016, less than 10% of colleges attributed considerable importance to class rank as a factor in admission decisions in 2016.

**If there is no class rank, how will the Academic Excellence Award be given by the State of Wisconsin?**

The designation of the Wisconsin Academic Excellence Scholarship will be awarded to the qualifying student(s) using the criteria outlined in Policy 5451.01. In short, the student or students with the highest weighted GPA after the 7th semester will be eligible for this award.

**Will students' ability to apply for scholarships be impacted by the elimination of class rank?**

The use of the Laude System is a common practice for school districts and is widely accepted. SASD will be working with local foundations and scholarship groups to provide information about the elimination of class rank and the transition to the Laude System over the next three years and assist in the removal of class rank from the applications.

**Will the SASD still award the Honors diploma to qualifying students?**

No, the Honors diploma will be phased out with the implementation of the three level Laude System.

**How will the transition to the new Laude System be monitored?**

As outlined in Policy 5421 - Grading, a Weighted Grade Review Committee will review the implementation and impact of these changes on an annual basis.

**Who should I talk to if I have questions about how this change to the Laude System impacts my child?**

If you have further questions, please reach out to your child's school counselor and/or building principal.