

# Elimination of Class Rank MHS

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**Presented by**

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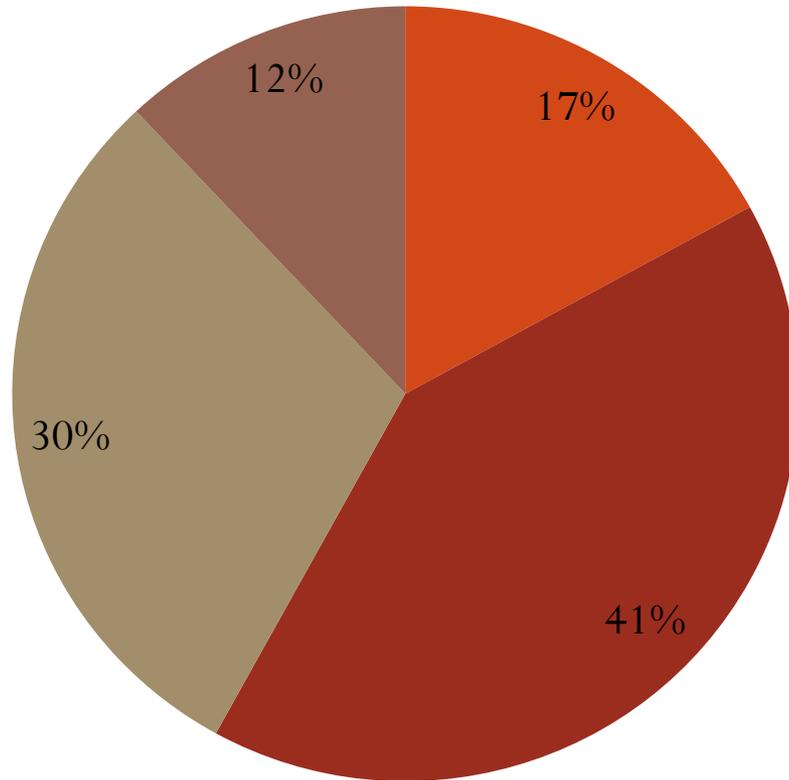
# WHAT IS THE CLASS RANK?

- Class rank is a student's numerical academic standing in his/her class in relation to all other members of the class (e.g., 50 in a class of 300). This standing is based on the mathematical computation of the grades earned, called a grade-point-average ("GPA"). Milton High School uses a weighted system where both the levels of the courses and the final grades are used in determining class standing. Courses are weighted in the following, ascending order: College Prep-level, Honors-level, and AP-level. Class rank is first computed for all weighted courses taken at high school through the end of your junior year. For more information on this topic see your guidance counselor.

# REASONS WHY NOT TO ISSUE CLASS RANK

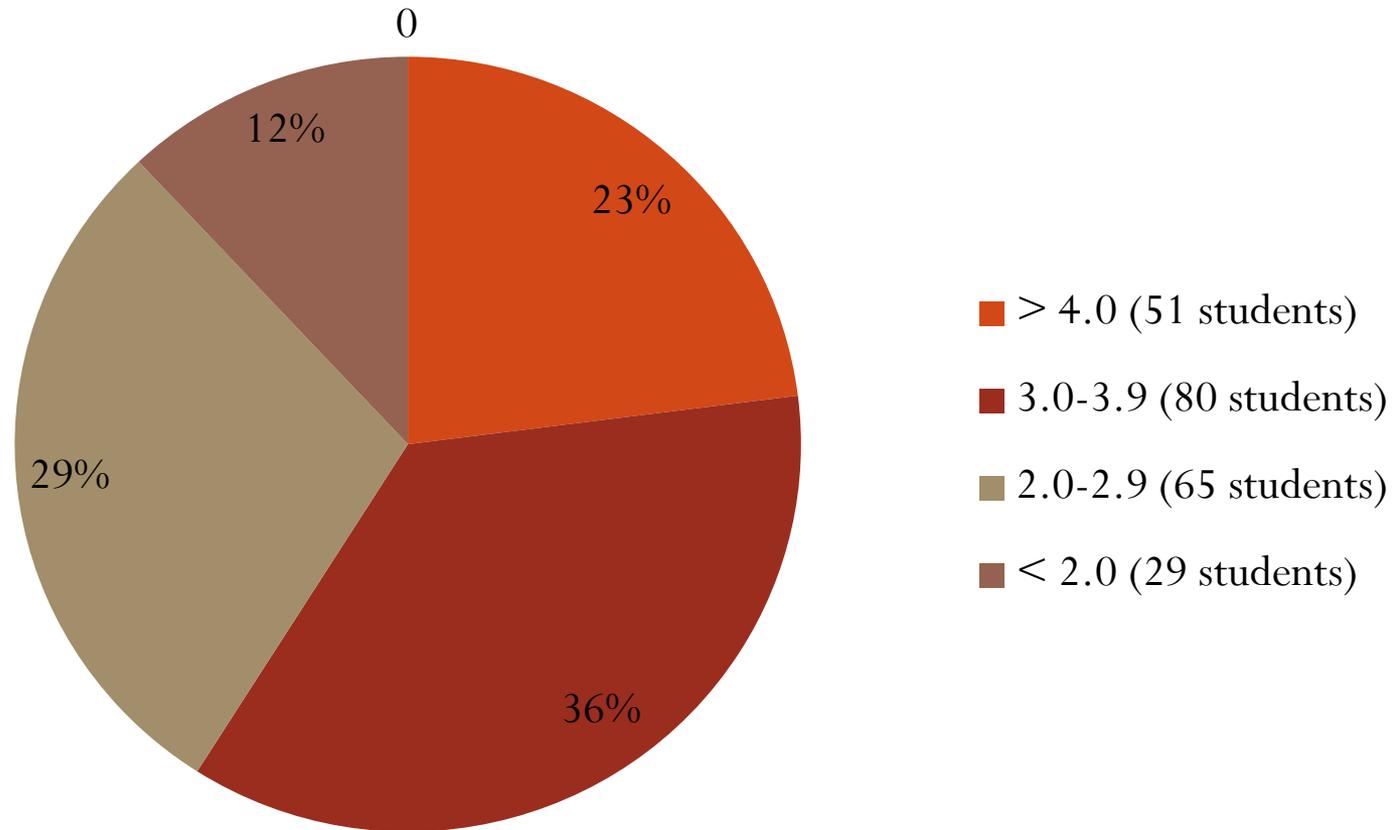
- Only top 10% benefit from class rank
  - Students with healthy GPA's are hurt by class rank
- Unhealthy competition between students
  - Students taking courses to improve class rank (dropping levels, working the numbers)
- Class rank does not define a student; colleges need to see the 'whole' student and that is sometimes overlooked when colleges see class rank.. a student with a GPA of 4.01 but a rank of 51 is not given the appropriate consideration because of his/her rank of 51
- A simple .1 GPA difference can mean a swing of dozens of places on a ranking, while really demonstrating very little academic difference between students

# GPA Class of 2017



- > 4.0 (41 students)
- 3.0-3.9 (100 students)
- 2.0-2.9 (73 students)
- < 2.0 (32 students)

# Class of 2016





# DISTRICTS THAT DO NOT ISSUE CLASS RANK

- Acton –Boxboro
- Ashland
- Brookline
- Canton
- Framingham
- Hopkinton
- Hudson
- Lincoln-Sudbury
- Medfield
- Millis
- Natick
- Needham
- Newton North
- Newton South
- Sharon
- Walpole
- Wayland
- Wellesley
- Westbrook
- Weston
- Westwood
- **Milton - Proposal**

# PRIVATE SCHOOLS THAT DO NOT ISSUE CLASS RANK

- Belmont Hill
  - Deerfield Academy
  - Dexter / Southfield
  - Milton Academy
  - Nobles & Greenough
  - Phillips Academy
  - Ursuline Academy
  - BB &N
- Boston College High
  - Thayer Academy
  - Fontbonne Academy
  - Newton Country Day
  - Notre Dame Academy
  - Roxbury Latin
  - Winsor School
  - Xavarian

# QUESTIONS:

Do colleges/universities demand class rank? **NO**

Does the Common Application require class rank? **NO**

You can either list actual class rank, or report as a deciles (sorted by tens) or quartile (sorted by four quarters) or **NONE REPORTED**

Will the student's GPA still be sent to colleges/universities?  
**YES**, only their weighted GPA

# WHAT WILL BE SENT TO COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES?

- Final grades for grades 9, 10 and 11 and the first quarter grade of their senior year
- List of courses taken and the level of the course (College Prep, Honors, AP, etc.)
- Course Level Description
- Total number of credits taken
- Student's GPA
- Actual "Grading system"
- Milton High School Profile
- Letters of recommendation from guidance counselor and teachers
- Activity Sheet/Resume

# Advantages of Using Class Rank

- High schools are able to make straightforward determinations of who will be valedictorian and salutatorian
- High schools do not need to submit as much background information about the school and its programs to the colleges
- College admissions officers have an easier time determining who should be accepted and to whom and how much scholarship monies should be awarded.
- Less emphasis on standardized test scores such as SAT and ACT.
- (College Board inspiring minds, Class rank and college admissions; Expert Admissions, 2010; Wolf, 2009).

# Disadvantages of Using Class Rank

- High schools must establish new ways to determine valedictorian and salutatorians
- High schools need to design and submit a complete profile to each college that provide information about: GPAs, range and median of GPAs, activities, curriculum, ACT and SAT scores, results of AP grade distribution of class, writing/project samples
- College admissions officers and their staff need to be aware of the high school and the rigor of its programs
- Some colleges take the total applicant pool and recalculate their GPAs, then add their own weighting system for AP and college prep courses. Other colleges look at scattergrams or bargraphs from each high school and determine where those students most likely would rank. Some colleges use unweighted classes for admissions and weighted ones for scholarships.

# Disadvantages of Using Class Rank

- In some schools, especially small ones, the use of class rank may push out students who are excellent
- Rankings can be a detriment to strong students getting into the college of their choice
- There is less “cut-throat” competition and stress for a high class rank position and students are all encouraged to do their best and take challenging courses. There is less risk in taking rigorous courses.
- (College Board inspiring minds, Class rank and college admissions; Expert Admissions, 2010; Ferkenhoff, 2006; Finder, 2005; NASSP, 2010; Rozacky, 2010; Weber, 2010; Wolf, 2009).

# BROWN UNIVERSITY

“Brown receives applications from high schools across the US and around the world. No two transcripts ever seem to be the same. Due to the lack of standardized reporting, we have made a commitment to reviewing an applicant based on the information provided by the applicant's school. Class rank is important because it is another indicator of student achievement. However, regardless of the availability of class rank, our admission officers attempt to contextualize the information in front of them. In addition to grades, we look at rigor of curriculum, test scores, and student involvement. Through recommendations and the student's writing, we gather information about the environment the student lives and how it has influenced the student's performance.

In short, Brown is committed to a holistic review and we welcome more information in making our decisions”.

# COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

“We have no preference if schools provide a rank for their students. I would say the majority of high schools in the United States no longer provide rank for their students and we work with that system.

If your school is considering eliminating class rank, we will support you and still review your applicants in a thorough and comprehensive way. We do pay close attention to school profiles and one thing we often find helpful in schools that have eliminated is a grade distribution for each graduating class. This does not need to be shared with students, but gives us an idea of where a student in the class may fall without assigning them a particular numerical standing. Many schools will include a bar graph or just a general percentage of the class with GPAs above a 90, above an 80, above a 70, for example”.

# Cornell University

- “Class rank is no longer a valuable evaluative tool because each year, more and more high school are eliminating the class rank. We do not compare class rank across schools. On the contrary, if provided, we compare it within a school. We focus more on academic rigor, intellectual potential, individual character, community service and involvement, extra curricular activities, recommendations, personal essay and assessments. Not having class rank does not negatively impact a students overall application”.

# HARVARD UNIVERSITY

“There is no formula for gaining admission to Harvard. Academic accomplishment in high school is important, but the Admissions Committee also considers many other criteria, such as community involvement, leadership and distinction in extracurricular activities, and personal qualities and character. We rely on teachers, counselors, and alumni to share information with us about an applicant’s strength of character, his or her ability to overcome adversity, and other personal qualities”.

# PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

“We pay attention to class rank if a school provides it (as you stated, some choose not to), and try to understand its significance in the school’s context (size, academic rigor, etc.). However, like any other single factor on an application, it is not decisive, nor assigned any particular weight in an application review. We consider rank a piece of the application as a whole in relation to its other parts, and trust the school’s discretion to include it or not”.

# YALE UNIVERSITY

- “Totally fine if your school moves to eliminate class rank from a selective school perspective. More and more schools are doing away with class rank and over half of the students applying to Yale are not ranked. We look at rank when it is given, but we look more closely at the actual transcript, the rigor of students’ program, essay, recommendations and school profile, which is more information than just a class rank can tell us”.

# What are colleges looking for?

## A more holistic view

- Have you reached your maximum academic and personal potential?
- Have you been working to capacity in your academic pursuits, your full-time or part-time employment, or other areas?
- Do you have initiative? Are you a self-starter? What motivates you?
- Will you contribute something to those around you?
- Who are you as a person and what do you aspire to be?
- Do you care deeply about anything—intellectual?  
Extracurricular? Personal?
- What extracurricular, athletic, community, or family commitments are you involved in?
- What is the quality of your activities? Are you fully invested?

# What are colleges looking for?

## A more holistic view

- How open are you to new ideas and people?
- What about your maturity, character, leadership, self-confidence, warmth of personality, sense of humor, energy, concern for others, and grace under pressure?
- Will you be able to stand up to the pressures and freedoms of College life?
- Will you contribute something to the college and to your classmates? Will you benefit from your college experience?
- What is your leadership potential?
- If you have not had much time in high school for extracurricular pursuits due to family obligations, work, or other obligations, what do you hope to explore in college with your additional free time?