

Major findings on Class Rank and Valedictorian and Salutatorian

- More than half of all high-schools no longer report student rankings (National Association for College Admission Counseling)
- Class rank and GPA have increasingly become discounted for admissions officers (College Board)
- The percentage of colleges that rated class rank as considerably important plummeted from 42% in 1993 to 13% in 2012 (State of College Admissions, NACAC, 2013)
- Almost 60% of high schools across the country do not rank their students. Research shows the number of colleges that view class rank as an important consideration has dropped significantly. Most colleges have adopted a more holistic approach to the admissions process. Important factors include the rigor of the academic program, GPA, SAT and ACT scores, essay or writing samples, and counselor/teacher recommendations. When rank is not provided, a student's application is evaluated based on these factors. High schools that have eliminated class rank report no adverse effect for their students when it comes to the college admissions process or to the awarding of scholarships. In fact, the percentage of college admissions officers identifying class rank to be of "considerable importance" in admissions decisions dropped from 26% in 2006 to 14% in 2015, with almost half of those surveyed reporting class rank to be of "limited" to "no importance" (National Association of College Admissions Counseling)
- Students evaluate their own academic qualities in large part on comparisons to other groups of students dissimilar to their own. Therefore, students with lower class rank exhibit less academic self-concept or perceptions of themselves as students, which can be a detriment to academic motivation (Trautwein, Ludtke, Marsh, and Nagy, 2009)
- Ranking students is more about selecting talent than developing students (Guskey, 2014).
- GPA, which is commonly used for ranking purposes, is often inherently flawed, lending itself to be far less used in college admissions when cross division/state class ranks are compared (Lang, 2007).

References

Guskey, T. R. (2014). Class Rank Weighs down True Learning. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 95(6), 15–19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003172171409500604>

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Trautwein, U., Lüdtke, O., Marsh, H. W., & Nagy, G. (2009). Within-school social comparison: How students perceive the standing of their class predicts academic self-concept. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 101(4), 853. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016306>