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Commissioner of Education



January 5, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: John L. Winn

SUBJECT: GPA Weighting Policies for Advanced Courses

This memo is in response to questions I have received on grade point average (GPA) weighting for dual enrollment courses. The language in the current law related to dual enrollment GPA weighting has led to different interpretations and implementation at the local level.

Specifically, Section 1007.271(16), Florida Statutes, addresses GPA weighting for dual enrollment courses. The statute specifies that *“School districts and community colleges must weigh college-level dual enrollment courses the same as honors courses and advanced placement courses when grade point averages are calculated. Alternative grade calculation or weighting systems that discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.”* This language was intended to ensure equal treatment of dual enrollment students regarding GPA calculations. However, the language is confusing because many school districts do not weigh Advanced Placement (AP) and high school honors courses the same. As a result, the language requiring that dual enrollment courses be weighed the same as honors courses and AP courses have led to different local interpretations.

I recognize that this section of statute needs clarification and will work with the Legislature during the next session to seek this clarification. To this end, I am establishing a work group to assess dual enrollment policies and to make recommendations on the interpretation and implementation of GPA weighting policies for advanced courses. Further, timelines for adhering to a standard interpretation will be recommended because it is important that our high school students not be subjected to midterm GPA recalculations. The work group will include members

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representing school districts, community colleges, universities, home education, and private institutions from the existing Postsecondary Transitions and Policies and Guidance standing committees of the Articulation Coordinating Committee. Your feedback on these policy issues is welcomed in this process. As we work together to resolve these issues, I ask each district to review its GPA weighting policy and ensure that it does not discriminate against dual enrollment courses, as specified in statute. Until such time that I can provide the needed clarification and clear guidance, I ask that individual concerns be handled at the local level.

JLW/sgm

cc: Community College Presidents