



# Cornwall Central School District

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Dear CCHS Families and Students,

Cornwall Central High School is excited to announce a new policy eliminating class rank and replacing it with a tier system (Latin Honors) to recognize our high achieving students. This decision came after two years of careful consideration, research, discussion and data collection from multiple stakeholders. The data collected, committee discussions and current research on college admissions overwhelmingly supported the elimination of class rank as it pertains to Cornwall Central High School and our student body.

Cornwall Central School District recognizes the importance of rigorous coursework, the breadth of a personalized learning experience and the social and emotional growth of students. The elimination of class rank allows us to lift these core principles to a higher level and improves the quality of the educational environment for all students.

Some key considerations that supported the elimination of class rank are as follows:

- According to the National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC), class rank has considerably declined as a factor of admissions due to the impractical nature of comparing students across different high schools and due to the fractional differences that separate students in regards to their grade point average. Additionally, over 60% of the high schools in the country do not rank their students.
- The growing trend for our students at CCHS shows an increasing distribution of high grade point averages for our students. In our current system of ranking, we are displaying ranks to colleges that show a student may not be in the top 10% or even 20% of the class (ex. a student with a 98 grade point average overall may be ranked 29<sup>th</sup> out of 274, therefore is not in our top 10% of the class). Additionally, when compared to their peers regionally with similar ranks, students at CCHS may have a higher grade point average and engage in a more demanding and rigorous coursework.
- Students and teachers have overwhelmingly reported the unhealthy nature of class rank in regards to unnecessary stress, anxiety and an environment that does not support academic risks for students. Observations from our staff have reported the negative impact our current system has had on our student's mental health.

## What are the tiers in the Latin Honors System?

While there is no one true system out there that exists, Cornwall Central High School has agreed upon the following tier levels to recognize their high performing students:

<u>GPA*</u>	<u>Tier</u>
92 - 94.999	Cum Laude (With Honor)
95 - 97.999	Magna Cum Laude (With Great Honor)
98+	Summa Cum Laude (With Highest Honor)

\*Based upon weighted cumulative GPA

### Phase in plan

#### **Current Senior Class (2021)**

- **Will they have class rank?** – Yes, these students have been given their rank last year (Junior year).
- **Will the top ten in the class be recognized?** – Yes, for this transition year, we will honor this tradition.
- **Will the Latin Honors tiers be recognized at graduation?** – Yes, as a way to introduce the new system, this class will have their tier recognized.

#### **Current Junior Class (2022) and beyond**

- **Will they have class rank?** – No, in anticipation of this change, rank was not given to the current Junior class. Rank will no longer be given to students from this class and beyond.
- **Will the top ten in the class be recognized?** – No, as we have shown in our research, each graduating class is unique and may have different numbers of high achieving students. To this end, we will honor our Summa Cum Laude graduates with this class and beyond replacing the top ten recognition.
- **Will the Latin Honors tiers be recognized at graduation?** – Yes, we will look to recognize this class and beyond with the tier system in various ways.

#### **Will there still be a Valedictorian and Salutatorian?**

Yes, Cornwall Central High School recognizes and appreciates the tradition of having a Valedictorian and Salutatorian represent their class symbolically and at graduation as speakers. Valedictorian and Salutatorian will be notified at the conclusion of the first semester of the senior year after grades are recalculated.

We know there are many other questions and we have created a website in which our research, Board of Education presentations and frequently asked questions are displayed. We encourage everyone to visit the site below which can be found under the Student Services section on the CCHS website.

[Elimination of Class Rank at CCHS](#)

Sincerely,



Joseph DeBold  
Director of Guidance K-12  
Cornwall Central School District