

## **Honors Grade Bump**

Mr. Trogisch began by stating that DCPS is unwilling to implement the grade bump retroactively, so he supports including a letter sent to colleges and scholarships explaining the inequities of the situation. This letter would explain that class rank and GPA are affected by both transfer and GWECP students, however one parent also proposed including an alternative ranking in the letter, calculated by the school, that would exclude GWECP students and students who have taken honors classes before coming to Walls.

Many parents and the student representative expressed concerns about having a ranking that excludes many students. One parent proposed submitting unranked GPAs to colleges without a class ranking, which was a solution originally supported by the student representative for being the most fair for all students. Mr. Trogisch explained that it is not possible to change anything on the transcript, including the ranks and weighted GPAs, which would make this solution impossible to implement without a change in DCPS policy. He also stated that the junior class rankings were incorrect at the time of the meeting due to issues with transferring grades from GW to Walls transcripts and that there are three GWECP students at the top of the senior class.

Additionally, a parent and teacher expressed that Walls has a reputation and students have always been able to choose from more than one college, no matter their ranking. The student representative replied by stating that this may be true, but students feel that their concerns are being minimized, as GPA and class ranking are key factors in the college application and scholarship process. One parent continued by expressing that there is real harm being done to the students of the junior class and the issue should not be swept under the rug.

Following more discussion, it was determined that the alternative ranking would be the best interim solution, but it is still necessary to continue pushing for the retroactivity of the honors bump from DCPS. Melody Webb proposed two motions:

1. Add an asterisk to the ranking on student transcripts with an addendum explaining the changes in the ranking system and providing an alternative ranking that does not include GWECP students and students who have honors weightings from other schools, signed by the principal and the counselor, and printed on letterhead, until another solution is approved by DCPS.
2. Convene a subcommittee of the LSAT and any members of the Walls community to discuss long-term solutions for the inequities of the current DCPS ranking system.

Both of these motions were approved by the consensus of the LSAT in a private vote that occurred after the conclusion of the meeting. The LSAT also decided that students should self-report their official DCPS ranks, but can include their alternative ranks in additional information sections of college and scholarship applications. Ms. Isaac also proposed that we request feedback from a range of colleges to learn their perspective on the issue and mentioned that many private schools do not rank, both of which could be topics for the new subcommittee.

One parent asked if the science teachers would come to explain their decision to not designate their courses as honors. Mr. Trogisch explained that choosing to weight the courses was handled individually by each department. The student representative requested that the chair or another representative from the science department attend the next LSAT meeting or submit their reasoning in writing. Mr. Ackerman, as the teacher representative, will communicate this request to the science department.

## **Budget**

Mr. Trogisch had no new updates about the budget. It should be received by the administration around February 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup>, and the LSAT will have until March 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the budget.

## **ASPEN**

Teachers continued to express that there many issues with ASPEN, especially that it alters students' grades. One teacher explained that she changed a 0 to a higher grade on an assignment and then ASPEN reverted the grade back to the original grade. Many other teachers and parents expressed similar concerns about ASPEN, especially for teachers who may not be aware of discrepancies. This problem is very stressful for students and teachers, as they have to ensure that the grades are correct due to the apparent miscalculations of ASPEN. Teachers also expressed concerns about the grade inflation that arises from how ASPEN calculates grades.