

Ms. Ana Rivas Logan, Member

SUBJECT: REQUEST THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DIRECT THE SUPERINTENDENT TO RECOMMEND A PLAN TO REVIEW AND REFORM THE EXISTING RANK IN CLASS SYSTEM AND IMPLEMENT A NEW SYSTEM OF RECOGNITION FOR EXEMPLARY STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

According to a July 2004 report by the National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC), 61 percent of high schools nationwide maintain a system of class rank, where students are ranked by their grade point average. Public schools are four times more likely to rank students than are private and parochial schools.

Post secondary institutions recognize that the grade point average can be a strong indicator of potential academic success. However, there is anecdotal evidence that suggest that high schools, particularly public schools, are slowly moving away from class rank. The main reason cited for this trend is that national reports have shown that class rank has hurt many academically strong students in the competitive world of college admissions.

Many school boards nationwide are addressing this concern. A recent report by the NACAC suggests that since 1993, the top two factors in the college admissions process is the student's strength of schedule and the admissions test along with the grade point average. During the same time span, colleges have de-emphasized their assessment of a student's rank in class.

The quest for the valedictorian title has become so fierce in some schools, that some students are more focused on their grade point average than on what they might be learning. In some cases, students are choosing courses because, in the calibrations at play in the rankings, one course could give them an edge in the contest of a tenth of a point, or even a hundredth or a thousandth. Conversely, students may select a less challenging class to score an easy "A".

A position paper was submitted by the Miami-Dade County High School Principals Ad Hoc Committee to Study Class Ranking and Valedictorian and Salutatorian Awards. Their findings led them to recommend a system that recognizes students' efforts by honoring them in a Cum Laude fashion the way most colleges and universities function.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools provides educational opportunities that foster academic excellence and diversity. Students should take courses because they are truly interested in its content and not because of the points it has to offer or the advantage that it provides towards becoming the valedictorian.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
ANA RIVAS LOGAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, direct the Superintendent to review and reform the existing Rank in Class system and implement a new system of recognition for exemplary student achievement.