

Freshman Vocabulary

CREDIT – A credit (or unit) is awarded to students who pass a year-long class, such as English I. Each semester class is worth one-half credit. A student has the capability of earning 3.5 credits per semester, or 7 per year. A total of **24/23** credits are required for graduation depending upon your diploma pathway.

GPA – This stands for **Grade Point Average**, which is calculated at the end of each semester of high school. It is the average of all seven classes per semester, using letter grades. On a 4.0 scale, an A receives 4 points, B = 3 points, C = 2 points and a D = one point. This is a cumulative average, meaning that your GPA is re-configured every semester, so each semester builds on the one(s) before it. It is very difficult to raise your GPA once it drops, so keep that in mind throughout high school.

OVERALL GPA VS. CORE GPA – Your overall GPA is computed using all seven classes per semester. Your core GPA, or sometimes called TOPS GPA, is computed from your **core** curriculum, which includes your four main academic areas plus foreign language, and your fine arts unit.

RANK IN CLASS– Rank is determined only upon graduation and will be based on the quality points a student earns in grades 9-12. It is calculated on a maximum of 28 credits, of which a maximum of 16 credits may be weighted. The student(s) who earns the most quality points will be ranked number one in the graduating class. Credits obtained in Jr. High will not count towards calculation of rank.

WEIGHTED GRADES – Honors, gifted and advanced placement classes in English, math, science and social studies receive an extra quality point for achieving an A, B, or C in those classes. This means an A in an honors or gifted class is worth 5 points instead of 4, a B is worth 4 and a C is worth 3. Due to weighted grades, a person's cumulative GPA can be higher than a 4.0.

EOC TEST – This stands for **End Of Course Test**. These tests are taken at the end of each course when it is taken. Students must pass Algebra I EOC or Geometry EOC, English II EOC or English III EOC, Biology I or US History EOC to graduate.

ACT TEST – This test is a college entrance exam that is commonly used in the southern region of the United States. The other college entrance exam is the **SAT**. It is generally not recommended that freshmen take the ACT. In order to qualify for TOPS, you must have an ACT composite score of 20.

PSAT- The preliminary SAT is a comprehensive assessment that provides practice for the SAT. When you take the PSAT/NMSQT as an 11th grader it serves as the national merit qualifying test.

ASVAB - This test is a multiple-aptitude battery that measures developed abilities and helps predict future academic and occupational success in the military.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT- AP courses are college-level courses offered in high school for qualified students who are interested in pursuing a thorough, comprehensive program of study and research. Students can choose to register for AP examinations near the end of the course. The score reported on the exam and each college's policy regarding AP will determine whether college credit will be granted.

CLEP- The College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP) offers the opportunity to earn qualifying scores on any of the 33 college subject examinations and accelerate your education.

DUAL ENROLLMENT- In partnership with local colleges, students can earn high school and college credit upon completion of a course.

TOPS – The Tuition Opportunity Program for Students is a comprehensive program of state scholarships awarded to students who maintain a 2.5 GPA in the approved college prep core curriculum and have scored a composite score of at least 20 on the ACT. Students who meet these two requirements, meet residency requirements and complete the FAFSA form will have their tuition paid by the state if they attend a college or university in the state of Louisiana. TOPS is a wonderful opportunity offered to high school students. If you plan to go to college, make it your goal to always maintain a **minimum** core/TOPS GPA of 2.5.

FAFSA - The Free Application for Federal Student Aid should be completed by all seniors and their parents after January 1st of their Senior year. This application is required for TOPS, student loans, pell grants, work-study and all forms of financial aid.