LOUISIANA OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Accessibility Notice

Archived Document — Alternative Format Available Upon Request

Filename: TOPS-High-School-Cumulative-GPA.pdf

About This Document

This document is part of an archived public record library. We are committed to making all information accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. Some archived documents may not fully conform to current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1 Level AA) or applicable ADA Title II requirements.

We are actively reviewing and remediating our document library. If you encounter any barriers accessing this content, please contact us using the information below and we will provide the information in an alternative accessible format as promptly as possible.

Request an Accessible Format

Contact:	Louisiana Board of Regents Communications
Email:	communications@laregents.edu
Phone:	(225) 342-4253
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 3677, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677
Online Request:	https://www.laregents.edu/web-accessibility-statement/
TTY / TDD:	Please use your preferred relay service

This accessibility notice was added automatically. The original archived document begins on the following page.

TOPS HIGH SCHOOL CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Q-1. Who is responsible for calculating the TOPS Cumulative High School Grade Point Average (TOPS Core GPA)?

A. The final TOPS Core GPA is calculated by the Louisiana Department of Education using data from your final transcript transmitted through the Student Transcript System (STS) by each Local Education Authority (LEA) (for public high schools) or by the high school (for non-public high schools).

Q-2. How is the TOPS Core GPA calculated?

A. Beginning with students who will graduate in the 2017-2018 school year and thereafter, the calculation of the TOPS Core Curriculum grade point average (GPA) will be calculated on a 4.00 scale using the grades for the courses that were used to satisfy one of the TOPS Core Curriculum, except for certain courses that will use a five (5.00) point scale for grades earned in designated Advanced Placement (AP) courses; International Baccalaureate (IB) courses; Gifted courses; Dual Enrollment courses, Honors courses, and Articulated courses offered for college credit by the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts used to complete the TOPS Core Curriculum.

The courses currently designated to be calculated on the 5.00 point scale can be viewed at https://www.osfa.la.gov/5scale. [2]

[2] *Courses approved for the five (5.00) point scale will be noted in updates to this document.*

For the designated courses, five quality points will be assigned to a letter grade of "A", four quality points will be assigned to a letter grade of "B", three quality points will be assigned to a letter grade of "C", two quality points will be assigned to a letter grade of "D", and zero quality points will be assigned to a letter grade of "F". Note that students earning credit in courses graded on the five (5.00) point scale may earn a grade point average on the TOPS Core Curriculum that exceeds 4.00.

Q-3. What is the required GPA to receive a TOPS Award?

The required cumulative grade point averages for 2022 graduates to receive TOPS are as follows:

TOPS Tech:	2.50
TOPS Opportunity	2.50
TOPS Performance	3.25
TOPS Honors	3.50

Q-4. What happens if I have taken more than the required number of units of core courses?

A. If you have earned more than the required number of units of courses that are included in the TOPS core curriculum, your TOPS Core GPA will be calculated using the courses with the highest grades that satisfy the required core curriculum category.

For example, if you have taken more than one higher level math course, any of which would satisfy the TOPS core curriculum requirement, the TOPS Cumulative High School Grade Point Average will be calculated using the high level math courses in which you received the highest grades.

Q-5. What happens if I have taken the same course more than once?

A. In the event you take the same core course more than one time, your TOPS Cumulative High School Grade Point Average will be calculated using the highest grade earned in the course. Example: if you earned an "F" in Algebra I and a "B" by repeating the course, the "B" would be used in calculating your TOPS Cumulative High School Grade Point Average.

Q-6. I earned credit for TOPS core courses on a Pass/Fail basis. How are these courses treated in the grade point average calculation?

A. For TOPS purposes, the Pass/Fail is not assigned a quality point value and is not included in the calculation of the TOPS Core GPA. A TOPS core course that is completed as a "pass" is not included in the grade point calculation in any way. Failed courses cannot be used to complete the core curriculum.

A Pass/Fail core course that is passed is used in counting the number of units needed to satisfy the TOPS core curriculum requirement. A Pass/Fail core course that is failed is not counted in the number of units needed to satisfy the TOPS core curriculum requirement.

If your school gave you a letter grade, it will be used in the calculation.

Q-7. I earned credit for TOPS core courses by taking proficiency tests. How will these courses be included in the grade point average calculation?

A. A TOPS core course that is earned through proficiency testing will not be included in the GPA calculation. The course may be used in counting the number of units needed to satisfy the TOPS core curriculum requirement.

Q-8. Why doesn't my TOPS Core GPA agree with the GPA shown on my official transcript?

A. Your TOPS Core GPA is calculated using only the grades earned for courses that are used to satisfy the 19 TOPS Core Curriculum units. Your high school transcript's cumulative GPA is based on all courses attempted. In addition, your high school may include failed courses that you have repeated for a passing grade on the official transcript. These differences will generally result in a grade point average that is different than the grade point average computed for TOPS. In addition, some high schools use a different grading scale than the 4.0/5.0 for certain courses used for TOPS so the conversion of the grades causes differences.

Q-9. My <u>TOPS Core GPA</u> is 2.499. Can this be rounded up to a 2.50?

A. No. The TOPS statute requires that you earn at least a 2.50 grade point average. A 2.499 average is less than 2.50 and may not be rounded up.

Q-10. I failed a TOPS core course, took the class over, then made an A, and our parish policy states that the F is not transferred to the transcript. How will LOSFA calculate my TOPS Cumulative High School GPA?

A. The TOPS Cumulative High School Grade Point Average will be computed using the grades on courses that are used to satisfy the TOPS Core Curriculum units. Courses that are failed cannot be used. The highest grade achieved for a course, regardless of the number of times the course is taken, will be used for the calculation. In this case, the student's "A" would be used.

Q-11. If I make a higher ACT score than 20, do I still need a 2.50 TOPS Cumulative High School Grade Point Average?

A. Yes. The TOPS statute requires a minimum TOPS Cumulative High School Grade Point Average of 2.50 for students graduating from Louisiana public and non-public high schools to be eligible for the TOPS Opportunity Award. This minimum TOPS core GPA cannot be waived.

Q-12. Is there any circumstance under which I could qualify for a TOPS Award without meeting the requirement to earn at least a TOPS Core GPA of 2.50 on the courses used to satisfy the TOPS core curriculum?

A. Yes. If you graduate from an out-of-state high school, an out-of-country high school, or complete a BESE approved home study program or if you meet certain intelligence testing requirements, you do not have to meet the TOPS Core GPA requirement nor the core curriculum requirement. However, if you graduate from an out-of-state or out-of-country high school, you must earn an ACT score that is at least 3 points higher than that required for students who graduate from Louisiana high schools. If you complete an approved home study program, you must earn an ACT score that is 2 points higher than students who graduate from Louisiana high schools for the Opportunity Award and 1 point higher for the Performance and Honors Awards.

In addition, if you do not graduate from high school and are determined eligible for a TOPS award by meeting certain intelligence testing criteria, you are not required to complete the TOPS core curriculum or achieve a minimum TOPS Core GPA. However, if you graduate from a BESE approved high school, you must have at least a 2.50 on the TOPS Core Curriculum units.

Q-13. If I make a 3.00 cumulative GPA in college, can I move up to a higher award level?

A. No. You are awarded TOPS based on your academic performance in high school. You must meet the TOPS requirements at the time of graduation from high school and once awarded, must meet certain academic standards in college to continue your award.

Q-14. If I did not have a TOPS Core GPA of 2.50 when I graduated high school, can I get a higher GPA in college and receive TOPS then?

A. No. You are awarded TOPS based on your academic performance in high school. You must meet the TOPS requirements at the time of graduation from high school.

Q-15. Is there an exception for the TOPS Core GPA if I have a disability or exceptionality and am on a 504 plan or have an IEP on file?

A. No. The statute requires a minimum TOPS Core GPA of 2.50. This requirement cannot be waived.

Q-16. My high school computes its grades on a semester basis. How will the Louisiana Department of Education calculate my TOPS Core GPA?

A. The TOPS Core GPA for your school will be computed using the two semester grades for each course. Your school may report either a single annual grade for a course or two semester grades using course part numbers, depending on the school's procedure.

Q-17. My high school computes its grades on an annual basis. How will the Louisiana Department of Education calculate the TOPS Core GPA?

A. The TOPS Core GPA for your school will be computed using the annual grade. Your high school may report either a single annual grade for a course or two semester grades, depending on the school's procedure.

Q-18. If through the use of substitutions, I have more than 19 units to meet the TOPS core curriculum requirement, will the TOPS Core GPA calculation be based on 19.0 units or the actual number of units used to satisfy the TOPS core curriculum?

A. The number of units used in the TOPS Core GPA cannot exceed 19 units.

Q-19. If I have one unit of Civics and ½ unit of Free Enterprise, how is the TOPS Core GPA calculated?

Note: If you graduate from a public school, you may NOT use ½ unit of Civics and ½ unit of Free Enterprise to meet graduation requirements. These students must complete one unit of Civics.

A. Public schools will use 220501 Civics 1st semester course code for the full year course, and this course will include a free enterprise component.

Private schools will use either the 220501 Civics first semester course code for the full year course, or if you take ½ unit of civics and ½ unit of free enterprise, the ½ unit of civics will be reported with 220504 Civics 2nd semester course code along with the grade for the ½ semester of Free Enterprise reported with the 220200 Free Enterprise course code.

For example, at a school that grades on a semester basis, you receive an "A" for the first semester and a "B" for the second semester of Civics. The "A" and "B" will be averaged (4+3)/2=3.50 and the GPA will be computed using 3.50 for the Civics grade.

Q-20. I took French I and failed it. I decided not to pursue French as my foreign language choice. Instead, I completed Spanish I and II to meet my foreign language requirement for TOPS. Will the French grade have any bearing on my GPA for calculating TOPS Core GPA?

A. No. A course that is failed cannot be used to complete the TOPS core curriculum requirement and only the courses used to satisfy the TOPS Core Curriculum units will be used in the TOPS Cumulative High School Grade Point Average calculation.

Q-21. If I complete French I, II, III and IV, will the Department of Education take the two highest grades or would the grades have to be from consecutive courses?

A. The TOPS core requirement is to complete two courses in the same foreign language. The courses do not have to be consecutive. The rules require the two highest grades in a category to be used. In this case, the two French courses with the highest grades would be used.

If your school grades on an annual basis and you receive:
"A" for French I
"C" for French II
"B" for French III
"D" for French IV
The grades for French I and French III would be used to calculate your TOPS High School Cumulative GPA.

If your school grades on a semester basis and you receive:
"A" for the first semester and "B" for the second semester of French I (4+3=7/2=3.5),
"C" for the first semester and "A" for the second semester of French II (2+4=6/2=3.0),
"B" for the first semester and "B" for the second semester of French III (3+3=6/2=3.0),
"A" for the first semester and "A" for the second semester of French IV (4+4=8/2=4.0),
The grades for French I and French IV would be used to calculate your TOPS High School Cumulative GPA.

Q-22. My school requires a minimum grade of a "C" in a foreign language to enroll in the next course level. How will the TOPS Core GPA be calculated if I have a "D" in Spanish I, a "B" in Spanish 1 and a "B" in Spanish 2?

A. The highest two grades will be used. In this case, the "B" in Spanish I and the "B" in Spanish II will be used.

Q-23. At my school, credits earned in the 8th grade, such as Algebra I, are recorded as "P" on my high school record. How will this be treated in the TOPS Core GPA calculation? Will a grade point value be assigned to the P grade and the total grade points divided by 19? Or, will the total grade points be divided by 18?

A. The grade points will be divided by 18. If a course is graded on a pass/fail basis, the ½ unit or unit earned will not be included to calculate the TOPS Core GPA, but passed courses will be used to satisfy the TOPS core curriculum requirements

Q-24. My school offers semester electives in English IV. Can I use the course names for the specific electives, or must they be recorded as English IV?

A. You must complete English IV. The TOPS Matrix will note acceptable substitutions for English IV.

Q-25. I took Spanish I in semester 1 and earned ½ unit. I was proficient, so my school advanced me to Spanish II for the second semester and I earned ½ unit in Spanish II, excelling again. In semesters three and four, I earned one full credit in Spanish III. Will this fulfill the foreign language requirement?

A. Yes.

Q-26. If I take ½ unit of Probability and Statistics and ½ unit of Advanced Math – Functions and Statistics, will this be accepted for one of the required advanced math units?

A. No. Beginning with high school graduates of 2018, a half unit of Probability and Statistics combined with a half unit Advanced Math – Functions and Statistics will not be acceptable.