

GPA Exempt Course Proposal

VISD students strive to meet their academic expectations, interest and talents. The District encourages all students to experience a variety of opportunities and participate in the arts, athletics and competitive programs. Students should not be limited in their choices due to GPA constraints based on class weighting. Every student should pursue their areas of interest and special talents to enrich their academic achievement. GPA exempt courses will open the door to these possibilities.

The top ranked high school students calculate every grade, consider every weighted course and keep track of their competitor's progress. The final GPA for the valedictorian and salutatorian often come down to a fraction of a point. VISD has students that hold these top positions while also participating in drill team, band and athletics, to name a few. By their senior year, these un-weighted courses could cost them their rank, leading them to be forced to make a decision: choose to stay in the top spot or follow their passion. The GPA exempt option allows a student to do both.

This option is available to juniors and seniors who wish to take a course that is not needed to meet graduation requirements. To qualify for the GPA exemption for the third or fourth year course, the student must have an overall "A" average in the prerequisite courses for the 3rd and 4th year course for which he/she is seeking an exemption. He/she must also have already taken the first two years of this particular course (exception: cheerleading) at the high school campus. All students must meet the prerequisites of each course and have parent, teacher, and counselor approval.

- Junior students may receive a GPA exemption for only one course their junior year.
- Full-year courses will be exempted for 1.0 credits only.
- Senior students who have not used the GPA exemption during their junior year would qualify for two exemptions during their senior year as long as prerequisites are met.
- The option of securing exemptions for two classes in the same year is only available to seniors for whom no GPA exemptions have been used prior to the senior year.

NOTE: Students may take only two (2) full-year courses or four (4) half-year courses on a GPA Exempt basis.

Grades for a GPA Exempt course:

Students who are eligible and choose to take one of these courses for a GPA Exempt grade:

- Will receive a numerical grade all year on the report card.
- Will receive a "P" for Passed, or "F" for failed, in place of the semester grade on the transcript.

Determining UIL eligibility:

The numeric grades earned in a GPA Exempt course will be used to determine eligibility for participation in all UIL or school-sponsored events. It will be used for honor roll, academic awards, National Honor Society, etc.

Enrollment Process:

- The student will complete the appropriate form and have it signed by the parent and teacher.
- It must be submitted no later than the end of the third week of each semester.
- Once an exemption request is submitted and approved, it cannot be changed.
- Students enrolled in a full-year course do not need to reapply during the second semester.
- Students who miss the deadline for application for the first semester, may apply for exemption for the second semester if they meet the criteria.