



Joseph G. Joyner, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

40 Orange Street
St. Augustine, Florida 32084
(904) 547-7500
www.stjohns.k12.fl.us

MEMORANDUM

TO: High School Principals
FROM: Tim Egnor, Executive Director for Curriculum Services
Bruce Patou, Chief Information Officer
SUBJECT: District Response to Semester Averaging
DATE: March 9, 2015

SCHOOL BOARD

Beverly Slough
District 1

Tommy Allen
District 2

Bill Mignon
District 3

Kelly Barrera
District 4

Patrick Canan
District 5

In January, the district returned to the standard practice of awarding a .5 credit at each semester for a one credit or year-long course. An attempt to change this practice occurred to offer consistency between courses with a state end of course exam worth 30% of the students final grade (averaged on a yearly basis to accommodate state mandates), and all other courses which used the semester averaging approach. Courses with state EOCs remain yearly averaged, but all other one credit courses have reverted back to semester averaging.

It was discovered that the application of credit at year-end impacted a student's ability to apply early for specific scholarship programs. The decision was made to revert back to the standard practice of awarding a half credit (.5) at each semester for year-long courses. The change was applied and had no impact on grades, class ranking, athletic eligibility or any other data report except the addition of .5 credit to the grades that had already been earned.

The first semester grade is determined by averaging the first 9 weeks grade, and the second 9 weeks grade, which earns .5 credit. The change back to the semester averaging had no impact on student grades for the first semester. Credit was applied to the final semester grade that had already been calculated.

It is possible, depending upon a student's performance the second semester, that yearly averaging could have worked to a student's advantage or disadvantage. With that in mind, schools will be able to access a report which will indicate students who would have earned a better cumulative grade at the end of the year by comparing the average of each 9 week grades, vs. the average of the two semester grades. While we anticipate the number will be small, the report will flag students who were negatively impacted by the change back to semester averaging.

This report cannot be run until second semester grades are entered at the end of the year. Teachers and administrators will be able to review each case to determine if a grade change should be made. While the number of reviews is difficult to predict, it is anticipated only a small percentage of students will be impacted.

The following link will take you to a Question and Answer document which offers greater detail into the rational for the decision and the actions that have been taken to ensure students will not be negatively impacted by the change.

<http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/depts/cs/Q%20&A%20for%20%20Award%20Credit.pdf>