RISE CHARTER SCHOOL

Policy 2720: ~~Valedictorian & Salutatorian Requirements~~ Graduation Honors and Academic Recognition **Status: ADOPTED**

Original Adopted Date: March 16, 2026
Last Revised Date:
Last Reviewed Date:

Beginning with the graduating Class of 2027, RISE Charter School will no longer designate a Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

Instead, RISE will recognize graduating students for their individual academic achievements through honors designations established by the school.

This decision reflects the Board's commitment to the following principles:

1. **Recognizing Individual Achievement:** Academic success should be measured by a student's demonstrated accomplishments rather than their ranking relative to classmates.
2. **Ensuring Fairness in Small Graduating Classes:** Because RISE has relatively small graduating classes, minor differences in grade point averages can disproportionately influence class rankings. A single course or grading difference may determine a student's standing without meaningfully reflecting differences in academic ability or achievement.
3. **Supporting Diverse Academic Pathways:** RISE offers students opportunities to pursue individualized learning experiences, including dual credit, advanced coursework, career and technical education, and other pathways. Traditional GPA rankings may not equitably reflect the rigor or diversity of these educational experiences.
4. **Encouraging Academic Excellence Without Competition:** RISE seeks to foster a school culture in which students are motivated by personal growth, academic achievement, and preparation for future success rather than competition for a limited number of titles.
5. **Celebrating Multiple Forms of Excellence:** The Board believes academic achievement, perseverance, leadership, service, and contributions to the school community are all worthy of recognition.

Academic Honors

RISE Charter School may recognize graduating students using the following academic distinctions:

Academic Honor	Cumulative GPA
Magna Cum Laude (High Honors)	3.75–4.0
Cum Laude (Honors)	3.50–3.74

Honors will be determined using the school's established GPA calculation procedures.

All students meeting the applicable criteria will receive recognition, regardless of the number of students qualifying.

Graduation Ceremony

Student speakers at graduation will be selected through a process established by school administration rather than automatically determined by class rank. Selection may consider academic achievement, leadership, character, school involvement, and the student's ability to represent the graduating class.

Effective Date

This policy shall take effect with the graduating Class of 2027 and shall supersede previous provisions establishing Valedictorian and Salutatorian designations.

~~**Valedictorian & Salutatorian Requirements**~~

~~**Effective through the Graduation Class of 2026**~~

~~The Board believes the Valedictorian and Salutatorian must represent the very best students RISE Charter School has each year in the graduating class. The following constitutes the policy to be followed annually in determining the Valedictorian and Salutatorian.~~

~~**Requirements**~~

~~**1. Valedictorian**~~

~~The Valedictorian shall be the student(s) with the highest grade point average (GPA), calculated using the 4-point standard unweighted grading scale at the conclusion of the final semester of the senior year.~~ ~~**To be considered for Valedictorian, a student must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.8 or higher.**~~ ~~If more than one student has the highest GPA, multiple valedictorians shall be recognized. A student who has applied for and been~~

approved to graduate early in accordance with the terms of Policy 2710 may be considered for Valedictorian recognition, including students graduating as a Junior.

2. Salutatorian

The Salutatorian shall be the student(s) with the second-highest grade point average (GPA), calculated using the 4-point standard unweighted grading scale at the conclusion of the final semester of the senior year. **To be considered for Salutatorian, a student must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher.** If more than one student has the second-highest GPA, multiple salutatorians shall be recognized. A student who has applied for and been approved to graduate early in accordance with the terms of Policy 2710 may be considered for Salutatorian recognition, including students graduating as a Junior.

3. Grading Scale

An unweighted 4-point grading scale will be used to file transcript grades and to communicate with colleges and universities. In addition:

a. Pass/Fail courses are not included;
b. Transfer grades are included

4. Eligibility

a. Enrolled at the school for at least 2 consecutive semesters prior to graduation (or 2+ years, **depending on board preference)**;
b. On track to meet all graduation requirements;
c. No major academic integrity violations;
d. The valedictorian to be in good disciplinary standing. Significant disciplinary infractions—like suspensions or repeated behavioral issues—may disqualify a student. The board will determine if a student is in good disciplinary standing.

5. Timeline

a. Honors will be announced one week before graduation

Additional Provisions

- Transfer students may request a transcript review to assess eligibility for Valedictorian status.
- A Valedictorian candidate involved in a major disciplinary infraction may have their status reviewed by school administration and/or the School Board.
- The School Board may take action up to and including revocation of Valedictorian or Salutatorian status.

Policy History:

Adopted on: March 16, 2026

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