



State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

For Immediate Release: Sept. 21, 2011

Study Finds Uniform Grade Standards Haven't Significantly Changed Eligibility for Lottery Scholarships

There are as many or more public high school students eligible for lottery scholarships based on their grade point averages as there were before the state standardized the grading scale five years ago. That is the key finding in a report released today by the Comptroller's Offices of Research and Education Accountability (OREA).

Before a uniform grading system was implemented July 1, 2006, grade point scales varied from school district to school district. For example, some districts regarded scores between 90 and 100 as A grades, while other districts treated scores of 95 to 100 as A's.

That meant the numerical grade point averages awarded by school districts varied, which had the potential to affect eligibility for some students seeking Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarships.

Today's report, titled "Evaluation of Tennessee's High School Uniform Grading Policy," includes survey data from school districts across the state. Most of the survey respondents said the standardized scale was identical to or more lenient than the scales they had been using prior to the implementation date.

OREA concluded that the number of students who qualify for lottery scholarships based on grade point averages alone had remained the same or increased slightly over the last five years.

The report, which is available online at <http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/OREA/>, addresses several other issues, including:

- Despite the standardized scale, grading can vary from district to district, school to school and even classroom to classroom. Therefore, eligibility for lottery scholarships based on grade point averages alone can still vary among students of similar academic ability.
- Although the change in state law requires standardization for the purpose of determining lottery scholarship eligibility, school districts are free to report grade point averages differently on student transcripts. These transcripts are often used by colleges and employers in evaluating recent high school graduates.
- Private schools are not required to follow the standardized scale in determining their students' eligibility for lottery scholarships.
- School districts have the option of adjusting grades for honors or advanced placement classes. However, not all schools offer those types of courses. That creates the potential for some students to have advantages or disadvantages in qualifying for lottery scholarships by grade point average.

OREA is an agency within the Comptroller's office that is charged with providing accurate and objective policy research and analysis for the Tennessee General Assembly and the public.

Media contact: Blake Fontenay, Communications Director, (615) 253-2668 or blake.fontenay@tn.gov

[Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury](#)
State Capitol Nashville, TN 37243
Phone: (615) 741-2501
Email: comptroller.web@tn.gov