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- Overall, 83% of students accurately reported their HSGPA within 0.50 units, and 58% accurately reported their HSGPA within 0.25 units.
- The correlation of student-reported and school-reported HSGPA was 0.84. A previous study on students who took the ACT Test in 1985–1986 found a median correlation of 0.80 across 30 high school courses.²
- On average, students over-reported their HSGPA by 0.07 units. A previous study on students who took the ACT Test in 1983 found that students over-reported their course grades by 0.14 units, on average.³
- Data from 1,980 students in 11 school districts were used to examine the accuracy of student-reported high school GPA.

² Sawyer, R., Laing, J., & Houston, M. (1988). *Accuracy of self-reported high school courses and grades of college-bound students* (ACT Research Report No. 88-1). Iowa City, IA: American College Testing Program.

³ Valiga, M. (1987). *The accuracy of self-reported high school course and grade information* (ACT Research Report No. 87-1). Iowa City, IA: American College Testing Program.

Accuracy of Student-Reported High School GPA

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In this brief, we compare student-reported high school GPA (HSGPA) to GPA data provided by schools. As part of an ongoing longitudinal study, HSGPA and other data were collected from multiple school districts.¹ Many of the students in the study also took the ACT® Test and reported the grades they earned in core subject area courses, which are then used to calculate student-reported HSGPA.

In the table below, we summarize the relationship of actual and student-reported HSGPA values. The results are aggregated by actual HSGPA level so we can determine if accuracy level depends on actual HSGPA. Unlike previous studies, we did not study self-report accuracy for individual courses. It is possible that some of the differences we see between actual and student-reported HSGPA are due to differences in which course grades are included in each average.

Accuracy by Actual HSGPA Level

Actual HSGPA Level	N	Mean HSGPA		Mean difference	Accuracy	
		Actual	Student-reported		% within 0.25	% within 0.50
0.00-1.49	85	1.03	1.85	0.82	14%	35%
1.50-1.99	172	1.77	2.04	0.27	30%	55%
2.00-2.49	265	2.24	2.35	0.11	40%	73%
2.50-2.99	408	2.81	2.76	0.05	47%	82%
3.00-3.49	451	3.24	3.23	-0.01	60%	90%
3.50-4.00	599	3.79	3.75	-0.04	87%	98%
Total	1,980	2.95	3.02	0.07	58%	83%

The results suggest that the accuracy of student-reported HSGPA increases with actual HSGPA. At the lowest level of actual HSGPA, only 35% of students accurately reported their HSGPA within 0.50 points, and students over-reported their course grades by 0.82 units, on average. At the highest level of actual HSGPA, nearly all students (98%) accurately reported their HSGPA within 0.50 points, and students slightly under-reported their course grades.

¹ Casillas, A., Robbins, S., Allen, J., Kuo, Y., Hanson, M.A., Schmeiser, C. (2012). Predicting early academic failure in high school from prior academic achievement, psychosocial characteristics, and behavior. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(2): 407-420.

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