

Scholars Academy Discussion Information Guide

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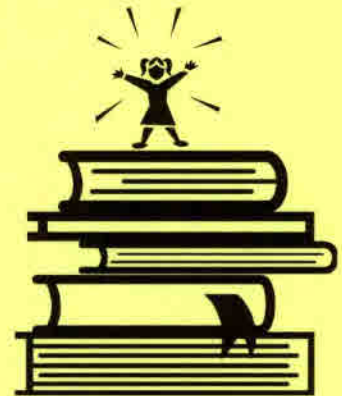
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Scholars Academy Discussion

Wednesday, June 25, 2014
District Office – 335 Four Mile Road
Room A-132
4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Scholars Academy History – Cindy Ambrose
- SC Uniform Grading Policy (*Handout*)
 - Class Rank & GPA Information
- Graduation Ceremony Recognitions (*Handout*)
 - Valedictorian/Salutatorian Information
 - Latin Honors Recognitions
 - Junior Marshals
- State Scholarship Information (*Handout*)
 - Palmetto Fellows
 - LIFE
- Discussion
- Next Steps



Notes:

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

SYNOPSIS AGENDA/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CODE: 55-03
COMMITTEE: Curriculum & Instruction
DATE: January 9, 2007

SUBJECT/TITLE

Revision to the 2006 South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy (First Reading)

PURPOSE OF REPORT/REGULATION/ITEM

Revisions to this policy require approval by the State Board of Education.

CRITICAL FACTS

In September, the State Board of Education approved the revised uniform grading policy to ensure its alignment with recommendations in the Report of the South Carolina High School Redesign (March 2006) and the Education and Economic Development Act (2006). Following the November 8, 2006, State Board of Education study session on the revised policy, the State Department of Education has determined that additional revisions are needed. Under *The Legislative Mandate*, third paragraph, page 55-03-01, we are proposing to add the following sentences: Recalculations will be limited to the three-decimal-place conversion factors specified in the South Carolina uniform grading policy's grade point conversion chart. Increased quality points for dual credit courses and full credit for dual credit courses will not be figured into recalculations. On page 55-03-4, please add the following sentence: College orientation courses for dual credit will be weighted as College Prep. On page 55-03-5, we are recommending the addition of this sentence: Computations will not be rounded to a higher number.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

- September 2005 A committee of 27 school and district representatives statewide was formed to review the 1999–2000 version of the uniform grading policy and determine if revisions were needed. The committee included assistant superintendents of instruction, guidance counselors, Commission on Higher Education members, curriculum coordinators, and SDE personnel.
- October 2005–January 2006 The committee continued to meet to revise the policy. Input was sought from instructional leaders throughout the state.

ACTION REQUEST

FOR APPROVAL: ☒FOR INFORMATION ONLY: ☐REVIEW REQUIRED BY EDITOR: Yes ☒ No ☐_____
Signature of Editor (If Required)_____
Date**APPROVED BY:**_____
Signature of Deputy Superintendent_____
Date_____
*Signature of General Counsel_____
Date_____
**Signature of State Superintendent of Education_____
Date**ATTACHMENT:** ☒

*The Office of General Counsel must approve any action that requires the promulgation, amendment, or repeal of State Board of Education regulations.

**The State Superintendent of Education must approve all item(s) *before* the item(s) is placed on the State Board of Education agenda.

When signature is not required, please put N/A in Signature block

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Grade Point Conversion Chart

South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale Conversions				
Numerical Average	Letter Grade	College Prep	Honors	AP/IB/ Dual Credit
100	A	4.875	5.375	5.875
99	A	4.750	5.250	5.750
98	A	4.625	5.125	5.625
97	A	4.500	5.000	5.500
96	A	4.375	4.875	5.375
95	A	4.250	4.750	5.250
94	A	4.125	4.625	5.125
93	A	4.000	4.500	5.000
92	B	3.875	4.375	4.875
91	B	3.750	4.250	4.750
90	B	3.625	4.125	4.625
89	B	3.500	4.000	4.500
88	B	3.375	3.875	4.375
87	B	3.250	3.750	4.250
86	B	3.125	3.625	4.125
85	B	3.000	3.500	4.000
84	C	2.875	3.375	3.875
83	C	2.750	3.250	3.750
82	C	2.625	3.125	3.625
81	C	2.500	3.000	3.500
80	C	2.375	2.875	3.375
79	C	2.250	2.750	3.250
78	C	2.125	2.625	3.125
77	C	2.000	2.500	3.000
76	D	1.875	2.375	2.875
75	D	1.750	2.250	2.750
74	D	1.625	2.125	2.625
73	D	1.500	2.000	2.500
72	D	1.375	1.875	2.375
71	D	1.250	1.750	2.250
70	D	1.125	1.625	2.125
69	F	1.000	1.500	2.000
68	F	0.875	1.375	1.875
67	F	0.750	1.250	1.750
66	F	0.625	1.125	1.625
65	F	0.500	1.000	1.500
64	F	0.375	0.875	1.375
63	F	0.250	0.750	1.250
62	F	0.125	0.625	1.125
0-61	F	0.000	0.000	0.000
61	FA	0.000	0.000	0.000
61	WF	0.000	0.000	0.000
—	WP	0.000	0.000	0.000

One quality point is added to the CP weighting for dual credit courses that are applicable to baccalaureate degrees or to associate degrees offered by accredited institutions (see State Board of Education Regulation 43-234, Defined Program, Grades 9–12, and Regulation 43-259, Graduation Requirements).

College orientation courses offered by postsecondary institutions carry CP weighting and do not receive honors or dual credit quality points.

Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Courses

The following criteria apply to the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) courses and to International Baccalaureate (IB) courses—including those offered online and in other nontraditional settings and those recorded on a transcript from an out-state-school that is accredited under the regulations of the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency: the New England Association of Colleges and Schools, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, or the Northwest Association of Colleges and School (as specified in State Board Regulation 43-273, Transfers and Withdrawals).

- Only AP or IB courses can be awarded a full quality point above the CP weighting. Seminar or support courses for AP or IB may be weighted as honors but not as AP or IB courses.
- An AP course can carry only *one* quality point.
- A standard-level (SL) IB course can carry only *one* quality point. However, two quality points of IB credit can be granted for higher-level (HL) courses in the IB program that require a minimum of 240 hours of instruction.

End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) Courses and the Credit Recovery Option

Students who are enrolled in courses requiring state end-of-course examinations must take the examinations and fulfill all requirements outlined in Regulation 43-262.4. Students will be allowed to take the examination only *once*, at the end of the regular course duration and not at the end of an extended period granted through the credit recovery option. Students who repeat the course must be treated as though they are taking the course for the first time, and all requirements will apply.

Converting Grades on Transcripts

When transcripts are received from accredited out-of-state schools (or in state from accredited sources other than the public schools) and numerical averages are provided, those averages must be used in transferring the grades to the student's record. If letter grades with no numerical averages are provided, this conversion will apply: A = 96, B = 88, C = 80, D = 73, F = 61. If the transcript indicates that the student has earned a passing grade in any course in which he or she had a numerical average lower than 70, that average will be converted to a 73 numerical grade on the new scale. See State Board of Education Regulation 43-273 for complete information on transfers and withdrawals. The criteria for accepting transcripts from homeschools are a local decision.

If the transcript shows that the student has earned a grade of P (passing), that grade will be converted to a numerical designation on the basis of information secured from the sending institution as to the appropriate numerical value of the P. If no numerical average can be obtained from the sending institution, the student's cumulative transfer GPA will be calculated and the corresponding number equivalent will be assigned to replace the P. (For example, if a student transfers with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 on the CP scale, the grade of P would be converted to an 89. A grade of P, in other words, will neither positively nor negatively impact the student's transfer GPA.)

Retaking a Course

Students in grades nine through twelve may retake a course at the same level of difficulty if they have earned a D or an F in that course. The student's record will reflect all courses he or she has taken and the grades he or she has earned.

The student may retake the course either during the current school year or during the next school year but no later than that second year. In addition, the student must retake the course before he or she has enrolled in the next sequential course (unless the student is granted approval by school administration to do so).

A student who has taken a course for a Carnegie unit prior to his or her ninth-grade year may retake that course regardless of the grade he or she has earned. In such a case, only the retake grade will be used in figuring the student's GPA, and only the retake attempt will show on the transcript. This rule will apply whether the retake grade is higher or lower than the grade the student previously earned.

Participation in a graduation ceremony is not a protected property right; therefore, a student may be denied the privilege as indicated below (however, the exit document must be provided as soon as reasonable after the graduation ceremony to a student who has completed requirements for graduation even if he/she does not participate in a graduation ceremony).

1. The Hearing Officer or District Appeal Board may determine that a student will be denied the privilege due to the student's committing an egregious violation of the Student Behavior Code in his/her senior year and/or having a history of serious violations of the Student Behavior Code.
2. The principal may deny a student the privilege due to a serious violation of the Student Behavior Code and the fact that the methods of discipline are limited due to the proximity of the violation to the ceremony. Prior to denying a student the privilege, the principal must afford the student and his/her parent(s) at least the due process rights and appeal rights set forth for student suspensions unless there is insufficient time to do so after the time of the infraction.

Rank in Class, Honor Graduates, Graduation Ceremonies

High schools uniformly determine the class rankings of students based on the grade point ratios ("GPRs") of students in grade twelve, i.e., seniors, including students considered to be in grade twelve (see "Acceleration of students in grades nine through twelve"). GPRs are calculated after seniors' grades are finalized at the end of the school year, i.e., at the conclusion of the fourth nine-weeks grading period. These final class rankings for seniors are computed in order to achieve the following three purposes:

1. To determine honor graduates, using the Latin honors system as follows:
 - a. Students with a weighted GPR* of 4.750 or higher on the S.C. uniform grading scale will be recognized as Summa Cum Laude graduates.
 - b. Students with a weighted GPR* of 4.250 or higher, but less than 4.750, will be recognized as Magna Cum Laude graduates.
 - c. Students with a weighted GPR* of 3.750 or higher, but less than 4.250, will be recognized as Cum Laude graduates.

**Weighted GPR calculations are based upon the S.C. Uniform Grading Policy's three decimal-point scale, and computations will not be rounded to a higher number.*

Honor graduates will be recognized at each district high school graduation ceremony in the following manner:

- a. A notation indicating honor status (i.e., Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, Cum Laude) will be inserted by the graduate's name in the high school's graduation program.
- b. The high school will announce the honor graduate's level of recognition (i.e., Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, Cum Laude) when the graduate walks across the stage.
- c. District-wide, a uniform color-coding system will be used for the honor cords awarded to honor graduates. The color coding is as follows:
 - Summa Cum Laude school color + gold

- Magna Cum Laude school color + silver
- Cum Laude school color + bronze

Academic regalia such as honors cords will be worn by a graduate during the ceremony provided that the student is:

- a. Eligible for Latin honors recognition, or
- b. A member of a chartered honor society.

Honor cords or other academic regalia may not be worn by students in graduation ceremonies to signify a student's membership or enrollment in an academy/club/organization/program, a student's completer status, and/or a student's winning a competitive event.

2. To determine students who will speak at district high school graduation ceremonies:
 - a. The Valedictorian (the senior with the highest weighted GPR) will speak at his/her school's graduation ceremony.
 - b. The Salutatorian (the senior with second highest weighted GPR) will speak at his/her school's graduation ceremony.
 - c. A third senior, who has earned magna or summa cum laude recognition, will be selected through election by his/her peers in the magna/summa cum laude student group to speak at his/her school's graduation ceremony.
3. To provide final class rank information that seniors may need to report to the post-secondary institution(s) of their choice.

Preliminary class ranking of seniors for college admissions and/or scholarships

Preliminary class rank will be uniformly determined on the 135th day of school for twelfth graders based on the students' weighted GPRs for the following two purposes:

1. To provide preliminary class rank information that seniors need for scholarships and other awards;
2. To provide preliminary class rank information that seniors need for admission to postsecondary programs.

Preliminary class ranking of juniors for selection of Junior Marshals

For the sole purpose of district high school graduation ceremonies, high schools will calculate the class rankings of eleventh graders, based upon their GPRs, on the 135th day of school, in order to identify junior class marshals. This 135-day ranking of eleventh graders is used only for the purpose of identifying junior class marshals.

Ranking of tenth and eleventh graders for South Carolina Palmetto Fellows Scholarship eligibility

In order for students in grades ten and eleven to be considered for initial eligibility for South Carolina's Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, calculation of GPRs and determination of class ranking for tenth and eleventh graders will occur after the 180th day of school when all grades have been finalized.

2014 VAL & SAL

School	Val GPA	Sal GPA
A	5.052	4.922
B	5.241	5.117
C	5.069	4.979
D	4.429	4.386
E	5.050	4.979
F	5.291	5.255
G	5.257	5.185
H	5.296	5.255
I	5.112	5.086

2014 Junior Marshals

	Total	Base School	Scholars Academy	ATA/AAST
A	16	16	0	0
B	20	6	6	8
C	20	14	4	2
D	8	7	0	1
E	10	8	1	1
F	13	5	0	8
G	10	6	2	2
H	21	17	2	2
I	20	14	5	1
Totals	138	93	20	25

Total Number of Junior Marshals = 138

Horry County Schools Data 2012 - 2013

Base High Schools With Scholars Academy Students

School	EOY Enrollment	Palmetto Fellows	LIFE	Amount
AHS	145	9	38	1,022,800
CFHS	390	21	111	2,833,200
CHS	274	10	76	1,812,000
GSFHS	73	2	24	538,400
LHS	176	7	49	1,184,400
MBHS	255	14	74	1,888,800
NMBHS	247	11	73	1,781,200
SHS	328	21	88	2,373,200
SJHS	269	20	89	2,364,000
Totals	2,157	115	622	15,798,000

Base High Schools and Scholars Academy as a Stand-alone School

School	EOY Enrollment	Palmetto Fellows	LIFE	Amount
AHS	141	6	40	975,200
CFHS	382	13	114	2,659,600
CHS	270	8	76	1,753,600
GSFHS	73	2	24	538,400
LHS	173	6	47	1,115,200
MBHS	253	12	75	1,850,400
NMBHS	243	7	74	1,684,400
SHS	321	21	86	2,333,200
SJHS	265	17	88	2,256,400
SA	36	11	25	821,200
Totals	2,157	103	649	15,987,600

Scholars Academy at USC Upstate

- Students attend the program for 4 years, but continue to be a student at the base school.
- Students are ranked at their base high school.
- Students are not recognized as valedictorian or salutatorian at the base high school graduation ceremony.
- Students are recognized as honor graduates at the base high school graduation ceremony.
- School has its own formal graduation ceremony.
- Students are ranked - valedictorian and salutatorian speak at its graduation ceremony.
- Students are awarded a plaque commemorating their 4 years in the program and an honor cord, which is worn at all of the base school graduation ceremonies.
- There were 73 students in the 2014 senior class and \$10 million in scholarship monies earned (so far).

SC Governor's School

- Students attend the program for their 11th and 12th grades.
- Students are not ranked while at the school.
- School does not recognize a valedictorian or a salutatorian.
- Students receive a letter describing the program and their accomplishments.
- Students may qualify for SC State Scholarships based on their 10th grade rank.
- There are legislative regulations established prior to the school's opening stating they cannot rank students.
- When necessary, an estimated rank percentage from base school is provided. (i.e. top 10% of the class)

Academic Magnet High School (Charleston, SC)

- Students are not ranked for purposes of college admissions and scholarships.
- School recognizes a valedictorian and a salutatorian.
- A rank is provided for the purpose of SC State scholarships; however, many students qualify based on SAT/GPA requirements.
- Graduates Receive Two Diplomas: South Carolina HS Diploma and the Academic Magnet Diploma.

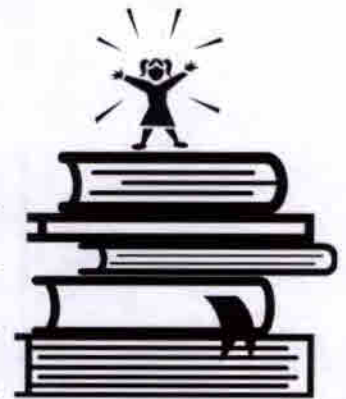
Scholars Academy Discussion

Wednesday, July 16, 2014
District Office – 335 Four Mile Road
Room A-132
4:30 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Summary of July 16th Meeting
- 2014 Palmetto Fellows & LIFE Scholarship Information – *(HO)*
- 2013 & 2014 Scholars Academy College Attendance – *(HO)*
- SCHSL Transfer Regulations
- Honor Societies & Clubs
- Valedictorian/Salutatorian Articles – *(HO)*
- Discussion
- Next Steps

Notes:



Horry County Schools Data 2013 - 2014

Base High Schools with Scholars Academy Students

School	EOY Enrollment	Palmetto Fellows	29,200.00	LIFE	20,000	AMOUNT
AHS	156	12	\$ 350,400.00	40	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 1,150,400.00
CFHS	374	25	\$ 730,000.00	130	\$ 2,600,000.00	\$ 3,330,000.00
CHS	314	11	\$ 321,200.00	92	\$ 1,840,000.00	\$ 2,161,200.00
GSFH	60	1	\$ 29,200.00	19	\$ 380,000.00	\$ 409,200.00
LHS	161	6	\$ 175,200.00	42	\$ 840,000.00	\$ 1,015,200.00
MBH	246	15	\$ 438,000.00	65	\$ 1,300,000.00	\$ 1,738,000.00
NMBH	285	12	\$ 350,400.00	79	\$ 1,580,000.00	\$ 1,930,400.00
SHS	318	17	\$ 496,400.00	144	\$ 2,880,000.00	\$ 3,376,400.00
StJH	293	15	\$ 438,000.00	86	\$ 1,720,000.00	\$ 2,158,000.00
TOTAL(s)	2207	114	\$ 3,328,800.00	697	\$ 13,940,000.00	\$ 17,268,800.00

Base High Schools and Scholars Academy as a Stand-alone School

School	EOY Enrollment	Palmetto Fellows	29,200.00	LIFE	20,000	AMOUNT
AHS	154	10	\$ 292,000.00	40	\$ 800,000.00	\$ 1,092,000.00
CFHS	368	19	\$ 554,800.00	131	\$ 2,620,000.00	\$ 3,174,800.00
CHS	309	7	\$ 204,400.00	91	\$ 1,820,000.00	\$ 2,024,400.00
GSFH	60	1	\$ 29,200.00	19	\$ 380,000.00	\$ 409,200.00
LHS	161	6	\$ 175,200.00	42	\$ 840,000.00	\$ 1,015,200.00
MBH	243	13	\$ 379,600.00	64	\$ 1,280,000.00	\$ 1,659,600.00
NMBH	282	10	\$ 292,000.00	78	\$ 1,560,000.00	\$ 1,852,000.00
SHS	314	15	\$ 438,000.00	142	\$ 2,840,000.00	\$ 3,278,000.00
StJH	290	12	\$ 350,400.00	86	\$ 1,720,000.00	\$ 2,070,400.00
SA	26	12	\$ 350,400.00	14	\$ 280,000.00	\$ 630,400.00
TOTAL(s)	2207	105	\$ 3,066,000.00	707	\$ 14,140,000.00	\$ 17,206,000.00

SA Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Data

	School Attended	Palmetto Fellows %	LIFE %	
Class of 2013				
1	USC		X	
2	USC	X		
3	College of Charleston	X		
4	USC	X		
5	Clemson	X		
6	USC	X		
7	Clemson	X		
8	College of Charleston		X	
9	Unity College		X	not used
10	USC		X	
11	Yale	X		not used
12	USC		X	
13	USC	X		
14	Coastal	X		
15	Clemson		X	
16	College of Charleston	X		
17	American University		X	not used
18	USC	X		
19	UNLV		X	not used
20	Harvard		X	not used
21	USC	X		
22	USC	X		
23	NYU-Shanghai	X		not used
24	Clemson		X	
25	Clemson		X	
26	USC		X	
27	College of Charleston	X		
28	Univ. of Mass--Amherst	X		not used
29	Rochester Institute of Tech		X	not used
30	USC	X		
31	Embry-Riddle	X		not used
32	Johns Hopkins	X		not used
33	Notre Dame	X		not used
34	USC	X		
35	Coastal	X		
36	Ga. Tech	X		not used
37	Coastal		X	
38	Coastal	X		

OVERLEAF

2013 Val & Sal Information

School	Valedictorian	Salutatorian
1	5.183	5.067
2	5.251	5.176
3	5.082	5.068
4	4.672	4.623
5	5.099	5.093
6	5.210	5.055
7	5.064	4.979
8	5.176	5.17
9	5.228	5.171

Tampa Bay Times

WINNER OF 10 PULITZER PRIZES

Pasco School Board considers ending tradition of valedictorians, salutatorians



Lisa Buie, Times Staff Writer

Tuesday, June 3, 2014 3:15pm

LAND O'LAKES — The longstanding tradition of students fighting it out to be first or second in their high school graduating class could soon become history in Pasco County.

Superintendent Kurt Browning has recommended eliminating the honoring of valedictorians and salutatorians beginning with next year's freshman class. Instead, top-performing students would be honored in groups under the Latin designations of *cum laude*, *magna cum laude* and *summa cum laude*.

At a School Board workshop Tuesday, Browning said the "val" and "sal" concept is outdated and "problematic." Board members did not object, and most on the five-member panel expressed support. A formal vote must be taken for the change to be made.

"I can make some pretty valid strong arguments why we need to phase out vals and sals," Browning said. "The difference between valedictorian and salutatorian is hundredths of a point."

A similar decision to eliminate the tradition in Hernando County last year prompted such a huge backlash that board members rescinded the policy.

Hillsborough and Pinellas also have valedictorians and salutatorians. Neither is considering a change.

In Pasco, the topic first came up a year ago when board members approved changes to the grading system that determines val and sals. Under that policy, which takes effect with freshmen entering in 2014, the district will use all courses that generate high school credit toward graduation — including those taken online, or in middle school — to calculate class rank grade-point average. The measure drew criticism that students might cheat in online courses. Board member Alison Crumbley also expressed concern that students who rarely visit campus could become the most honored graduate. Browning said then that the tradition should be re-examined.

Administrators said the new policy would make high school graduations more like college, where top graduates are



Pasco's chief Kurt Browning wants to phase out the honoring of "vals" and "sals."

designated by Latin terms signifying achievement levels.

Doing that, they argued, would reward more students. It also would eliminate problems posed by options such as virtual school and dual enrollment, which give grades on different schedules than traditional high schools.

Browning mentioned a student whose guidance counselor told her she would be salutatorian. But a virtual course she took awards grades past the deadline for final grade-point averages so it wasn't included in the calculations. "She ended up third," he said.

Browning admitted the issue is emotionally charged, so he wanted board members to weigh in early.

Most Pasco board members said they were okay with ending the practice.

"This is going to be like the buggy whip," board member Joanne Hurley said. "It's going to be obsolete."

Board member Steve Luikart, a former principal, said he has seen students "move from school to school" so they could have the highest GPA.

Browning said competition is so cutthroat, that at one meeting with parents "it felt like I was being deposed."

Bianca Gallina, 18, the 2014 salutatorian of Fivay High School, said she supports getting rid of the titles.

"They don't always take into account extracurricular activities or advanced placement classes," she said. "(For example), a student who takes all regular classes and has a 4.0 can place higher than students who take honors classes."

Gallina said in addition to her AP classes, she had a job and played soccer.

"It only looks at GPA," she said. "I think that's why it's not fair to everyone."

Trent Crawford, salutatorian of Anclote High, took the opposite view.

"It feels good to be recognized for a long four years of hard work," he said. "I don't think getting rid of it would be a good idea."

As for deciding who would give graduation speeches if valedictorians and salutatorians go away, Browning said he would leave that up to the schools.

"I'm not going to micromanage that," he said.

Times staff writer Jon Silman contributed to this report.

Pasco School Board considers ending tradition of valedictorians, salutatorians 06/03/14

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Pasco School Board moves toward dropping top class honors



Jeffrey S. Solochek, Times Staff Writer

Tuesday, July 1, 2014 10:20am

LAND O'LAKES — Who's No. 1?

That soon could become a well-kept secret in Pasco County high schools.

The School Board took a giant step Tuesday toward getting rid of valedictorian and salutatorian recognitions at graduations, replacing the titles with an honors-based award system. Class of 2018 students would earn the Latin designations of cum laude, magna cum laude and summa cum laude based on their grade point averages.

Class rankings would continue, but the special privileges that come with the top two spots would disappear.

Pasco would be the second area school district to take such a step. Hernando County eliminated its graduation titles a year ago but reinstated them a short time later. The issue came up briefly in Pinellas County several years ago, but never got any traction. Hillsborough County is not considering a change.

Pasco board members suggested that superintendent Kurt Browning's idea, which he proposed to end cutthroat competition for class rank, seemed like a fair way to treat students and recognize their hard work. They gave it their initial blessing as part of the district's 2014-15 student progression plan.

"I don't see this as a detraction," board member Joanne Hurley said. "I see this as an enhancement to all the programs we have."

She noted the district provides students many types of courses, including dual enrollment and virtual classes, which count toward students' GPAs. The grades arrive at different times of the year, board member Cynthia Armstrong said, making it difficult to determine who really is the top student in the class when the list is set.

"If you could wait until mid summer when all the grades are in, you could have a very different result," Armstrong said.

One parent spoke against the idea during the board's public hearing. Rick Penberthy read a letter from his daughter, Cortney, the 2007 Wesley Chapel High valedictorian.



Aubrey Willis, Makayla Wilson, Nikki Wisniewski and Miranda Wooten wearing their personalized mortarboard while waiting to be seated at Pasco High School's graduation ceremony

She said the superintendent's proposal would take away the sense of confidence and accomplishment a student can feel for achieving the goal of becoming valedictorian. She likened the competition to that of playing sports or running for election.

"Valedictorian and salutatorian are more than mere labels," Penberthy read from his daughter's letter. "They are ambition, sources of pride."

Board members said they appreciated the letter. Member Allen Altman, who has opposed eliminating the titles for eight years, said it gave him more ideas to think about in the weeks before the final vote.

"I am still gathering information," said Altman, whose daughter was salutatorian of Pasco High. "I still have more questions."

Board vice chairman Steve Luikart, a retired high school assistant principal, said he was leaning toward backing the new concept.

Students need to learn to compete against themselves to be the best they can be, he said, and "not beat the guy who's next to you." Still, he left the door open on his final decision at a future meeting, too.

Some other parents and students have sent their views, which go both ways, with some supporting the "time-honored tradition" and others saying the change would "eliminate the unnecessary drama."

The board must have a final hearing before voting on the progression plan. If adopted, the valedictorian and salutatorian titles would be eliminated beginning with the freshman class entering this fall.

The Broward County School Board recently considered a similar idea, but decided against cutting the titles. It did add honors recognitions such as the ones Browning has proposed.

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Pasco School Board moves toward dropping top class honors 07/01/14

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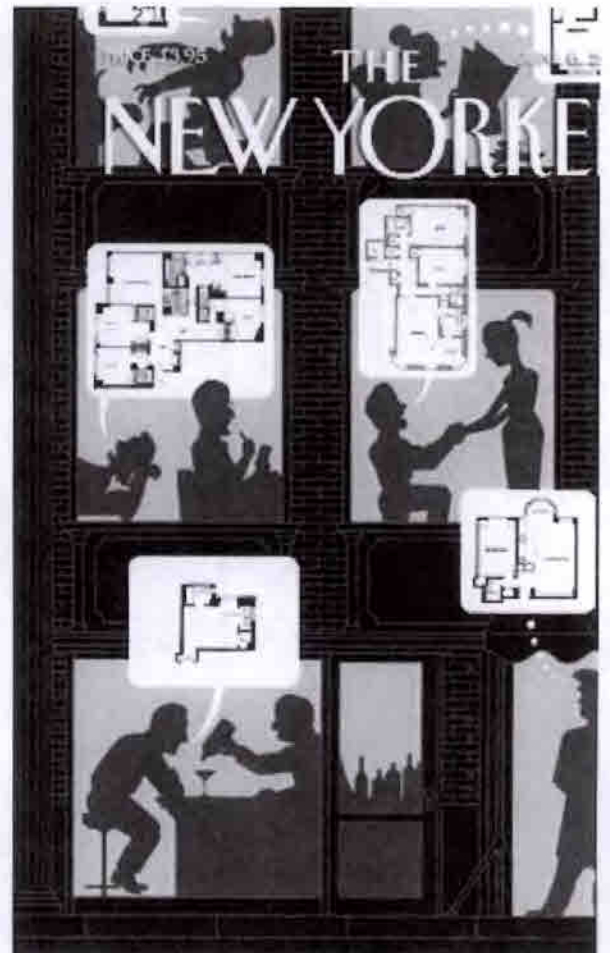
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Daniel Kennedy remembers when he still thought that valedictorians were a good thing. Kennedy, a wiry fifty-nine-year-old who has a stern buzz cut, was in 1997 the principal of Sarasota High School, in Sarasota, Florida. Toward the end of the school year, it became apparent that several seniors were deadlocked in the race to become valedictorian. At first, Kennedy saw no particular reason to worry. "My innocent thought was What possible problem could those great kids cause?" he recalled last month, during a drive around Sarasota. "And I went blindly on with my day."

The school had a system in place to break ties. "If the G.P.A.s were the same, the award was supposed to go to the kid with the most credits," Kennedy explained. It turned out that one of the top students, Denny Davies, had learned of this rule, and



had quietly arranged to take extra courses during his senior year, including an independent study in algebra. "The independent study was probably a breeze, and he ended up with the most credits," Kennedy said.

Davies was named valedictorian. His chief rivals for the honor were furious—in particular, a girl named Kylie Barker, who told me recently that she had wanted to be valedictorian "pretty much forever."

Kennedy recalled, "Soon, the kids were doing everything they could to battle it out." As we drove past sugary-white beaches, high-rise hotels, and prosperous strip malls, he told me that the ensuing controversy "effectively divided the school and the community." Kennedy took the position that Davies had followed the school's own policy, which he had been resourceful enough to figure out, and whether he should have been allowed to load on an easy extra class was beside the point. He'd done it, and he hadn't broken any rules. Davies's guidance counsellor, Paul Storm, agreed. In an interview with the Sarasota *Herald-Tribune* at the time, he said of Davies, "He's very clever. He said, 'I want to be valedictorian. I've figured out I need to do this and that. Can you help me?'" Denny had a good strategy, and this strategy was available to anyone who was a competitor."

Barker's supporters argued that what Davies had done was a sneaky way of gaming the system. "It never crossed my mind to approach it as a *strategy*," Barker, who is now pursuing a Ph.D. in chemistry at Northwestern University, said. "I just thought it was something you worked really hard for." Kimberly Belcher, who was ranked third that year, and who is now studying for a doctorate in theology at Notre Dame University, told me, "Among our friends, who were sort of the Academic Olympics and National Honor Society types, it was a big deal. Most of the people I knew thought that it was unfair of Denny to use what we thought of as a loophole to take a class that was too easy for him, and to do it secretly. We felt betrayed. I'm not angry anymore, but, boy, I was angry then." Davies, who is now a captain in the Air Force, and is stationed in Germany, said that he didn't care to comment about the dispute, except to say that he was a "firm believer in the idea that people benefit from healthy competition."

During the final weeks of the school year, Kennedy was meeting with both sets of riled parents, and students were buttonholing him in the hallway. "I'm telling you, it was hostile!" he said. Some teachers considered boycotting graduation; students talked about booing Davies when he walked out onstage. Kylie Barker's mom, Cheryl, said that she recalls getting a call in the middle of the day from Kylie's chemistry teacher, Jim Harshman, who asked her to pick up Kylie from school, saying, "She's in a pressure cooker here, and she's about to burst."

Kennedy tried to broker a compromise. Davies had suggested that he and Barker be named co-valedictorians, and Kennedy embraced the idea. But the Barkers weren't excited about it. "The principal was trying to make everybody happy, and when you do that there's always somebody

who isn't," Cheryl Barker said. "I guess it was me."

Kennedy remembers finally "convincing everybody to agree reluctantly—and I do mean *extremely* reluctantly—to have co-valedictorians." He went on, "I have been in education basically my whole life, and I've been to a lot of graduations in my time. But I dreaded this one. Sarasota High is a big school—three thousand kids—and there were probably seven thousand people in the audience. At that time, it felt like half of the students in the room hated one of those two valedictorians and half hated the other. The tension was so thick that I was sitting up there in my cap and gown sweating buckets the whole time." In the end, both students got through their speeches—Kylie's was about integrity—without incident. But Kennedy, a likable traditionalist who has been married to his childhood sweetheart for thirty-seven years, concluded that it was time to get rid of valedictorians at Sarasota High.

Kennedy convened a committee to consider various alternatives, and it was decided that from then on all students in the top ten per cent of the class—which at Sarasota means about seventy-five people—would march in first during graduation and have an asterisk printed next to their names on the program. "Students and parents got to see more kids recognized," Kennedy said. "It made everybody feel better."

Sarasota is a competitive school district—while visiting the area, I saw a car with a bumper sticker that read, "My Child Was Student of the Month at Tuttle Elementary"—but most of the local high schools have followed Kennedy's lead. Riverview High School has also eliminated valedictorians and salutatorians; Booker High School ended the tradition last year. Four years ago, North Port High opened near Sarasota. George Kenney, its principal, recalled thinking that it "would be easier to just start out without valedictorians, so we wouldn't be taking something away later on." He added, "There's an awful lot of clawing and scratching to get to the top. You have families at some schools coming in freshman year saying, 'How can my kid get to No. 1?' And the pressure that puts on teachers is inexcusable. 'Valedictorian' is an antiquated title, and I think it has more negative connotations and effects than positive ones."

When Kennedy left Sarasota High to form a charter school, the Sarasota Military Academy, in 2001, he did not even consider having a valedictorian. Kennedy has an amiable way about him, but he's not kidding when he says, "My advice to other principals is, Whatever you do, do *not* name a valedictorian. Any principal who does is facing peril."

At one time, it was obvious who the best students in a school were. But now the contenders for the valedictorian title, especially at large, topperforming suburban high schools, are numerous and determined. Many schools offer Advanced Placement courses—and sometimes honors and International Baccalaureate classes—extra weight when a student's G.P.A. is calculated, so that an A earns 5.0 points, versus 4.0 in a regular class. Students who fill their schedules with A.P. classes, as the ambitious ones tend to do, can end up with G.P.A.s well above

4.0.

Jim Conrey is the director of public information at Adlai Stevenson High School, in Lincolnshire, Illinois—a public school with forty-five hundred students that is well funded enough to have such a thing as a director of public information. Students at the top of their class, Conrey said, are often separated by one thousandth of a decimal point. A few years ago, a school committee issued a report saying that “parents routinely phone the principal’s office to express their concern over the competitive nature of our numerical ranking practice. Minuscule differences between the ranks of two students can often be perceived as major differences. Is a student ranked No. 1 in a given class really the ‘best’ student in that class?” As of this year, Stevenson High will no longer have a valedictorian and a salutatorian. Instead, students can apply to speak at graduation, and a faculty panel will select two winners. “If you go to a really good school, you could be ranked a hundred and thirty-fourth in your class and still be a really good student,” Conrey said.

Between 1990 and 2000, the over-all mean G.P.A. of high-school students increased from 2.68 to 2.94, which is attributable in part to grade inflation and in part to the fact that students are working harder. Last year, more than a million students took at least one A.P. course. During the nineteen-nineties, the percentage of students taking A.P. or International Baccalaureate classes in math more than doubled, from 4.4 per cent of graduating seniors to 9.5 per cent. My own high school, North Hollywood High, in Los Angeles, had three or four A.P. classes when I graduated, in 1979 (a time when we were told that our most illustrious alumnus was Bert Convy, the game-show host; Susan Sontag had gone there, too, but nobody mentioned her). Now it has twenty-two.

Some schools, responding to the critique that competition has got too bruising, have decided that naming a single valedictorian is part of the reason that today’s students have become so anxious. (Many small private schools came to this conclusion long ago, and never adopted the valedictorian tradition.) An organization called Stressed Out Students, which is headed by Denise Clark Pope, a Stanford education professor, has a list of about twenty-five schools, mostly in the Bay Area and Silicon Valley, that have pledged to try to make students and their parents less driven. Pope told me that “it would be healthier to eliminate valedictorians or change the rules, so that, for example, anyone who wants to can put their hat in the ring, and then there can be a vote for the best graduation speaker. Then you get a person who really wants to give a speech. It’s not an academic contest.”

A number of schools now call everyone who gets a 4.0 or higher a valedictorian. At Cleveland High School, in the San Fernando Valley, there will be thirty-two valedictorians this year. At Mission San Jose, in Northern California, there will be twenty-three. “We have such an outstanding student body that it was just hard to get that definitive,” Stuart Kew, the principal of Mission San Jose, said. “Occasionally, we get the criticism that it’s so watered down it doesn’t

mean anything. But the students don't feel that way." On graduation day, each of the school's many valedictorians will speak at a ceremony, where, one hopes, the chairs will be comfortable.

The single-valedictorian tradition is also being endangered by lawsuits. In 2003, Brian Delekta, who narrowly missed having the highest G.P.A. in his class, sued his school district, near Port Huron, Michigan, asking that he be credited with an A-plus, instead of an A, for a work-study class that he took at his mother's law firm. (In addition, Delekta asked for a restraining order on the publication of class rankings.) In another case that year, Blair Hornstine, a senior at Moorestown High School, in New Jersey, and the daughter of a New Jersey superior-court judge, sued the local board of education to be named the school's sole valedictorian; she also asked for two hundred thousand dollars in compensatory damages and more than two million dollars in punitive damages. Hornstine had an unspecified illness that caused "substantial fatigue," and, with the consent of the school district, she had taken many of her classes at home, with private tutors. Her transcript showed twenty-three A-pluses, nine A's, and a single A-minus; two-thirds of her classes were A.P. courses. Her weighted G.P.A. was 4.6894, which reportedly put her .055 points ahead of her closest competitor, Kenneth Mirkin.

The school board, however, decided that Hornstine's home instruction had given her an unfair advantage and that she should share the valedictorian title with Mirkin. Judge Freda Wolfson sided with Hornstine. The defendants, she wrote, "should revel in the success" of their accommodation to a student's disability "and the academic star it has produced," instead of seeking "to diminish the honor that she has rightly earned." In her ruling, Judge Wolfson nevertheless made a larger point about the insidious effects of naming a top student. "The fierceness of the competition in Moorestown High School is evidenced by the widespread involvement of parents in this dispute, which may have been fueled by the school's emphasis on grade-based distinctions," she wrote. "While the school's Handbook states that it seeks to minimize competition by no longer reporting class rank . . . elsewhere it heightens the levels of competition by naming a valedictorian." The case inspired a mocking Web site, the Blair Hornstine Project, and a flood of vitriolic Internet commentary; Hornstine was so excoriated by critics in her home town that she did not even attend graduation. The Moorestown Board of Education acknowledged no wrongdoing but eventually agreed to an out-of-court settlement, under which Hornstine was reportedly paid sixty thousand dollars. (Harvard, which had admitted her to the Class of 2007, rescinded the offer not long after a local paper for which Hornstine had written a column revealed that she had plagiarized material.)

I recently spoke to some students who had been involved in legal actions over the naming of a valedictorian, and they seemed to share a common attitude toward the experience. On the one hand, they shrugged off the importance of the honor—they had gone on to colleges where valedictorians were so plentiful that to have claimed bragging rights would have been seriously

uncool. On the other hand, they could easily recall their high-school state of mind, and feel indignant all over again, utterly convinced that they had done the right thing. In 2003, Sarah Bird, a senior at Plano West Senior High School, in Plano, Texas, requested a hearing before the local school board. Another student, Jennifer Wu, had been named sole valedictorian, although her G.P.A. was virtually identical to Bird's. Bird had played on the school's basketball team. The sport was treated like a physical-education course by the school, and for several semesters she had been given unweighted A's. This had put her at a disadvantage, Bird felt. The hearing, at which Bird's lawyer asked that the two students be named co-valedictorians, involved some very close parsing. Brent William Bailey, Bird's lawyer, told me, "Going in, the other girl had a G.P.A. of 4.46885 and Sarah had 4.46731—so that was a difference of .00154. Then the calculations were redone and Sarah came out with a G.P.A. of 4.47647." The school board granted Bird's request. "I was prepared to go ahead with a lawsuit if it hadn't gone our way," Bailey recalled. Wu, who expressed unhappiness over the decision to the *Dallas Morning News*, then requested a hearing of her own, to question the way the process was handled. Wu is now a sophomore at Harvard, where she is a pre-med student. We spoke just before finals, and she clearly had other things on her mind. "Nobody in college cares about your having been valedictorian," she said. "My roommate had no idea I was valedictorian. It doesn't come up, and I don't think about it." Still, when I asked Wu why she had complained to the school board, she said, "I wanted to make sure the school knew how traumatic something like this can be—thinking you're competing under one set of rules, and having an expectation because of that, and then finding out you're competing under another."

Stephanie Klotz's academic ambitions made her stand out at Valley View High, in Germantown, Ohio, from which she graduated in 2001. "We weren't from here originally," Klotz told me. "My dad had been in the military, and we'd lived in Pennsylvania, Idaho, Texas, and upstate New York. I knew there was a big world out there, and I was going to go out and conquer it. I wasn't going to get married right out of high school and be a housewife with twenty kids." Klotz paused, but not for long. "I mean, Germantown is a place with only three stoplights. I come from a very educated family, and expectations are set at a higher level than they are in a small farming town." Then, too, Klotz said, she was always kind of a "nerd—a science nerd, a nature nerd." She continued, "My dad went deer hunting when I was three years old, and they were cutting up the deer next door, because my mom wouldn't let it in the house, and I was, like, 'Daddy, can I play with the head?' " As a young girl, she loved accompanying her father, an anesthetist, to the hospital, where she was allowed to observe surgeries. At Valley View, where football is very popular—T-shirts bear the slogan "Valley View Football Is Life. Nothing Else Matters"—Klotz was often unhappy. She doesn't like football, and was captain of the dance team, which, she said, "got me made fun of—that and being smart. I'd say, 'I want to see *you* do a kick

line for an hour!’ ” She also worked with the town’s rescue squad (“I was so service-oriented; I did hundreds and hundreds of hours of service work”), loved science, and hated English and history. She was often “bored to tears” in classes that she found insufficiently challenging, but she got straight A’s anyway, as well as tens of thousands of dollars in college-scholarship money.

Several weeks before the school year ended, the principal of Valley View told Klotz that she and four other students would share the valedictorian title. Klotz thought the decision was odd—as she recalled, one of the girls had got a B—but she let it go. “Notices were sent out, relatives notified,” her father, Randy Klotz, said. Three of the students had G.P.A.s above 4.0 because they’d taken at least one A.P. course, whereas Stephanie, whose G.P.A. was 4.0, had not. (Instead of taking A.P. history in her junior year, Stephanie, who hoped to become a doctor, had decided to take another chemistry course.) Three weeks before graduation, Stephanie was told that the school was reversing its decision: she and Megan Keener, another girl with a 4.0 G.P.A., wouldn’t be valedictorians after all. (Keener, too, lacked A.P. credits, though she had been taking classes at local colleges.) Two students with G.P.A.s above 4.0 would be named co-valedictorians, and a third would be salutatorian. “I would be nothing,” Klotz recalled.

When Klotz told her parents, they complained first to the principal, then several times to the school board. Finally, the family hired a lawyer and sued the school district, the superintendent, and the principal of Valley View. A judge in the Common Pleas Court of Montgomery County, Ohio, sided with the Klotzes, and, days before graduation, issued an order reinstating Klotz and Keener as valedictorians.

“At first, I was, like, I’m seventeen, I can’t be dealing with this before I graduate from high school,” Klotz told me. “I’m not strong enough. And then I thought, I need to fight for the people who are coming after me, who really aren’t strong enough to fight.” Graduation day, she recalled, “was kind of a comedy event, really. I was sitting there, bored, twirling my tassels.” Klotz said that she wasn’t allowed to speak, because the decision to reinstate her title was made just before graduation day. One of the valedictorians who did speak, she recalled, “read that Dr. Seuss book ‘Oh, the Places You’ll Go!’ to the audience. I mean, she read practically the entire book.” Klotz remembers being given “so many academic awards and plaques, it was ridiculous. Every time I sat down, I had to get up again to get an award. I had so many plaques I literally couldn’t carry them off the stage, and I’m, like, ‘Oh, yeah, right, I’m not valedictorian?’ ”

Klotz graduated magna cum laude from the University of Dayton in May, and will start medical school at the University of Cincinnati in August. At college, Klotz realized that she was “a little fish in a big sea with a lot of valedictorians.” But she’s glad that she sued: she learned that she could be a fighter when she needed to be, and she showed Germantown that she couldn’t be “walked all over.” Klotz, who is engaged to be married to a social worker, is working as a waitress until school starts. To her fiancé’s chagrin, she’s been watching a lot of “trauma-and-

E.R. shows” at home. (He lacks her strong stomach.) “There’s so much focus on all the terrible things youths in our society do—murdering each other, using drugs—that I think it’s good to focus on the positive things, as opposed to people who are dropping out and are failures,” she said. “There are all these special programs to keep kids in school, give them a special experience, make them feel special. So much of classroom experience is focussed on these kids who are *lacking*. There’s nothing to reward the kids who are self-motivated and are working hard.”

The first public high school in the United States, Boston’s English Classical School, was founded in 1821. Within a few decades, the practice of designating a valedictorian had become an established tradition in American high schools. There was little public financing of secondary schools and a good deal of hostility to them, at least until the eighteen-eighties. High schools were so widely criticized as palaces of privilege, teaching Latin to the children of the rich, that Horace Mann, the education reformer, tried for a while to come up with a new name for “high school,” reasoning that perhaps the phrase implied “superior and exclusive,” William J. Reese notes in his 1995 history “The Origins of the American High School.” (In fact, many high-school students in the nineteenth century were middle-class girls training to support themselves as teachers.) By 1900, roughly ten per cent of American adolescents were enrolled in high school, and public funding remained relatively small.

The graduation ceremony, and in particular the valedictory, served an important purpose for proponents of publicly funded secondary education. A clever graduate declaiming loftily was something to show off to the local taxpayers, and, besides, graduation ceremonies were popular entertainments in an age that lacked television and radio and honored elocution and oratory. “By the late eighteen-fifties, approximately four thousand spectators attended the graduation exercises at Philadelphia’s Central High School—and twice that number was turned away,” Reese writes. “Eight to ten thousand citizens arrived for the event in Cleveland in the eighteen-seventies.” In smaller towns, five hundred or more people might show up to see five or six graduates.

The valedictorian prize also celebrated people who weren’t often publicly recognized: studious girls. In the nineteenth century, young women largely outperformed young men in American high schools. They generally won more prizes, graduated at higher rates, and displayed lovelier penmanship. At graduation, girls would read while sitting or standing on a low step, since it wasn’t considered proper for them to speak from a platform. Still, the opportunity to appear before an audience of hundreds or thousands, to be singled out for one’s academic achievements, must have been heady at a time when modesty and self-effacement were the constant counsel for young women.

In 1981, two professors, Terry Denny and Karen Arnold, began following the lives of eighty-one high-school valedictorians—forty-six women and thirty-five men from Illinois. (Their

sample is, admittedly, narrow.) According to Arnold's 1995 book "Lives of Promise: What Becomes of High School Valedictorians," these students continued to distinguish themselves academically in college; a little less than sixty per cent pursued graduate studies. By their early thirties, most were "working in high-level, prestigious, secure professions"—they were lawyers, accountants, professors, doctors, engineers. Arnold totted up fifteen Ph.D.s, six law degrees, three medical degrees, and twenty-two master's degrees in her group. The valedictorians got divorced at a lower rate than did the population at large, were less likely to use alcohol and drugs, and tended to be active in their communities. At the same time, Arnold, who stays in touch with her cohort, has found that few of the valedictorians seem destined for intellectual eminence or for creative work outside of familiar career paths. Dedicated to the well-rounded ideal—to be a valedictorian, after all, you must excel in classes that don't interest you or are poorly taught—the valedictorians had "used their strong work ethic to pursue multiple academic and extracurricular interests. None was obsessed with a single talent area to which he or she subordinated school and social involvement." This marks a difference, Arnold said, from what we know about many eminent achievers, who tend to evince an early passion for a particular field. For these people, Arnold writes, a "powerful early interest evolves into lifelong, intensive, even obsessive involvement in the talent area." She goes on, "Exceptional adult achievers often recall formal schooling as a disliked distraction." Valedictorians, by contrast, conformed to the expectations of school and carefully chose careers that were likely to be socially and financially secure: "As a rule, valedictorians relegated their early interests to hobbies, second majors, or regretted dead ends. The serious athletes among the valedictorians never pursued sports occupations. Most of the high school musicians hung up their instruments during college."

Becoming a valedictorian at a top high school is a gruelling trajectory—involving perhaps a dozen A.P. classes and hours of study each night. Sometimes students cave in to the pressure. In 2002, Audrey Lin, one of Mission San Jose's many valedictorians, admitted that she had cheated to get to the top in high school, and gave back her valedictorian plaque. Lin, who is now a student at Berkeley, made her confession in conjunction with the release of a study by the Josephson Institute of Ethics, in which three-quarters of the high-school students surveyed acknowledged having cheated on a test the previous year; ten years earlier, the number had been sixty-one per cent.

In some ways, it seems that the valedictorian is a status designed for a simpler time, when fewer people aspired to college. It isn't entirely suited to a brutally competitive age in which the dividing line between those who go to college and those who don't may be the most significant fissure in American society, and in which the children (and parents) of the upper middle classes have been convinced that going to an exceedingly selective college is the only way to insure wealth and happiness.

Still, perhaps something is lost if schools eliminate valedictorians. Like spelling bees, the contest for valedictorian offers a pleasing image of a purer meritocracy, in which learning and performing by the rules leave one hardworking person standing. It seems sad to abolish the tradition—and faintly ridiculous to honor too large a group. (If we're trying to be more sensitive, doesn't it make ordinary students feel *worse* when they can't be one of several dozen valedictorians?) Maybe the answer is to stick to one valedictorian but to make the rules of the contest clear, and to be sure everyone knows them. Maybe the honor should go to the student who is not necessarily the smartest but the most adept at running a peculiarly American kind of academic marathon, one that requires prodigious energy, tactical savvy, and a Tracy Flick-like determination. (Remember the Reese Witherspoon character from "Election"?)

"Over the past ten years, a lot of school districts have been abolishing the valedictorian, and I'm against that," Karen Arnold told me. "On the day we allow anybody who's always wanted to be a quarterback to play on the high-school football team, *then* we can get rid of valedictorians. If we rank anything, we ought to rank what we say is most central to school, which is to say, academic learning."

A few weeks, ago, I met Cheryl Barker, the mother of Kylie, the girl at Sarasota High School who, as it turned out, was one of the last two valedictorians at the school. Her daughter went to Furman University, in South Carolina, then to Northwestern. Cheryl Barker was a waitress when Kylie was in high school, and she is now the manager of a family-style restaurant in Sarasota. Her husband owns a print shop, and they have two younger children, a daughter who is graduating from Florida State this year and plans to go to law school, and a son who just graduated in the top ten per cent from Sarasota High.

Cheryl Barker still marvels at how hard Kylie worked, how determined she was, how she never missed a day of school, how she'd go to the library all the time to use the computer because they didn't have one at home. Barker thinks that it was a mistake for the high school to stop naming a valedictorian and a salutatorian. "Those kids all know who the No. 1 and 2 are, anyway," she told me over coffee. "Everyone's so afraid of getting sued or losing their jobs these days that they try too hard to candy-coat things." But, she added, "there are some kids who what they're good at is studying. That's what they do. They deserve something special to strive for. They do." ♦

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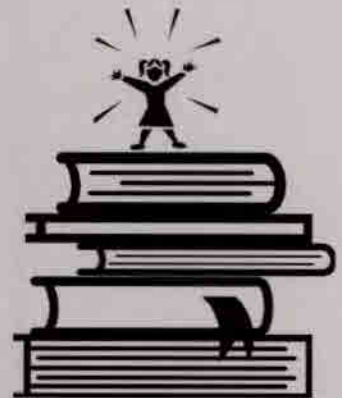
Scholars Academy Discussion

Wednesday, July 30, 2014
District Office – 335 Four Mile Road
Room A-132
4:30 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- SA Clubs and Organizations - (HO)
- SA PTSO Meeting Review & Notes - (HO)
- SA Student Survey Results - (HO)
- Identify Big “Take-Aways”
- Discussion
- Next Steps

Notes:



Biology Club:

Biology Club is a student-inspired and interactive organization whose main goal is to serve the students and community of the area while learning about the biological features of our world. Each year, the Biology Club picks a theme and revolves most fundraisers, service projects, and club lessons around that topic. The theme for the 2014-2015 school year is currently set to be Ecology, including anticipated projects like beach sweeps, work with the local Waccamaw River Keepers, and fundraisers for the WWF. Biology Club is also looking to be involved in several lab and research projects with CCU Biology professors in the fall.

Note: Students do NOT need to have taken ANY level of Biology in order to be a part of this club.

Student Contact: Jacob Livingston (President, 2014-2015, Senior), Linda Infantino (VP, 2014-2015, Senior)

Teacher Contact: Ryan Carter

Creative Writing Club:

The Creative Writing Club is for creative writers and anyone who appreciates creative writing. Our club sponsor is Mrs. Vencie Maxey. We meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month to share, discuss, and criticize writing by members of the club (as well as writing by published authors.) At each meeting, we typically have time for 5 people to each share one composition. All genres are welcome. The conversations we have are organic- usually concerning, but not limited to plot, style, and writing process. During special meetings (holiday-themed or writing prompts), we make time for everyone to share their writing but must limit discussion time. All readers are welcome to visit and appreciate the talents of our classmates. All writers, we encourage you to join our small community, to share what you love, to learn and grow with us in our craft.

Student Contact: Mikki Antonio (President, 2014-2015, Senior)

Debate Club:

The Scholar's Academy Debate Club is a student-led organization that seeks to proliferate intelligent discussion and debate among its members. We provide an outlet for students who wish to engage in meaningful and thoughtful discussion concerning various philosophical, social, political, and moral issues. The purpose of this organization is to provide students with a safe and inquisitive environment, permitting improved understanding and investigation of controversial issues. We will also engage in various community service and fundraising events in order to propagate education and intellectual thought throughout our community and the world. The only requirement is an open-mind! If you are interested, please contact Shrayan Shetty in school or at shrayanshetty@gmail.com or speak with Mr. McDowell, our club sponsor. Thank you, and we hope to see you at our first meeting!

Fellowship of Christian Students:

FCS is a student-led Christian organization who's goal is to help students learn and grow through the Bible and fellow peers. Each week, FCS aims to give students a break from a hectic week of school to refocus their minds and actions on God through discussion, lessons, and guest speakers. FCS is open and welcoming to all students, and strives to help each and every member grow and develop their relationship with God and Christ.

Student Contact: TBD (Jacob Livingston and Mikki Antonio for now)

Teacher Contact: Wendy Shoemaker

Meets: Every Wednesday at lunch

Interact Club:

Sponsored by the Carolina Forest Rotary Club, Interact Club is a service-oriented, student-driven organization that sponsors several monthly service projects in the area for its members. Members of Interact

Club live by the motto "Service above self," working to serve their community and better their surrounding area by dedicating their time to helping others. Interact Club helps its members gain not only community service hours, but also lasting relationships with each other and those we are helping in the community.

Student Contact: Jacob Livingston (President, 2014-2015, Senior)

Teacher Contact: Stanlee Morrison

Meets: 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month

International Quill and Scroll Honor Society

An honor society dedicated to students with an interest in journalism and media, the International Quill and Scroll Honor Society invites rising juniors and seniors who have contributed to journalistic endeavors at The Scholars Academy to become a member. To be considered for induction, students must have completed two courses of Yearbook or Journalism or be involved in a media communications role sponsored by a Scholars Academy teacher. Interested students should see Mrs. Shoemaker for possible opportunities to serve The Scholars Academy journalistically. Qualifying students will be contacted directly by Mrs. Shoemaker prior to the annual induction ceremony.

Teacher Sponsor: Mrs. Shoemaker

Club President: Tanner Slagle

Literature Club:

Come join the Literature Club at the Scholars Academy! The club serves as a forum for informal discussion of different types of literature. We survey poems, short stories, plays, soliloquies, and a novel or two over the course of the year. It is a great way to expand your literary knowledge and enjoyment beyond what you encounter in your English class in a more relaxed environment. Join us in our pursuit of great fiction and art through fellowship accompanied by the occasional brownie!

"There is no surer foundation for a beautiful friendship than a mutual taste in literature." –P.G. Wodehouse

Student Contact: Sarah Ellen Floyd (President, 2014-2015, Senior)

National History Day:

National History Day is a yearlong research project that is focused around an annual theme. Students have the option to present their findings in a variety of formats including website, documentary, performance, exhibit, or historical paper on an individual or group basis. Scholars Academy students who participate in National History Day will participate at the Regional Contest in the spring and will have the ability to continue with the competition as they advance. Some classes will have NHD as a core component, but all students are invited to participate. Thus, the goal of the National History Day Club is to provide a supportive and conducive group environment for interested students to participate in the National History Day competition while expanding their research, synthesis, and oral and written communication skills. Students interested in participating should see Mrs. Holley or National History Day Club President Tanner Slagle for more information and for a timeline of events.

National Honor Society:

The National Honor Society chapter of Scholars Academy is a part of the nationwide NHS organization devoted toward honoring and promoting high school students who have demonstrated excellence in scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Established in 1921, the nationwide organization along with the Scholars Academy chapter not only recognizes its members for their accomplishments, but works towards cultivating further involvement of the students. In order to become a member, a Scholars Academy student must be in 11th or 12th grade, have a cumulative GPA of 4.25, and must have demonstrated excellence in scholarship,

leadership, service, and character. Throughout the year, the Scholars Academy NHS chapter participates in numerous community service and school-wide fundraising events.

PTSO:

The purpose of the Scholars Academy PTSO is to support the the education of students at The Scholars Academy by fostering relationships among the students, their families, and the faculty by providing volunteer and financial support. Students interested in participating in PTSO meetings should watch for an announcement of meeting dates from Mr. McQueen or PTSO President Jay Huggins. All meetings are open to students, parents, and community members.

President: Jay Huggins

Student Contact: Linda Infantino

Religions Studies Club:

The Religions Studies club will meet on the 2nd and 4th Fridays after school

Members must attend at least 50% of all meetings.

The club is designed for the studying and presentation of religious bodies of belief, from the popular to the bizarre.

Scholars Squad:

Scholars Squad is the student government association at The Scholars Academy. As a governing body, student representatives take ideas from their fellow classmates into consideration as they plan cornerstone events throughout the school year including the multiple spirit weeks and field days, the annual CCU Tailgating, and the Winter Dance. Students work closely in conjunction with the Scholars Academy PTSO and the faculty in order to facilitate an enjoyable and conducive learning environment at The Scholars Academy. To run, students must not be on academic probation or have been in ISS during the school year. Each grade will have four representatives with the student with the highest vote count being named the class president. A separate election will take place among the student body in the spring to elect the student body president. Interested students should look for information regarding elections at the end of first quarter or see Mrs. Holley or Scholars Academy Student Body President Tanner Slagle.

Teacher Sponsor: Mrs. Holley

Club President: Tanner Slagle

Ultimate Frisbee Club:

The ultimate frisbee club meets every Tuesday and Thursday after school on field next to the parking lot. The club is very laidback and has a wide range of skill levels. Last year average attendance was about 8-12 people. It's a great way to relax, socialize, and have fun. If you're interested, contact club president Caleb Scruggs or teacher sponsor Mr. Shuford.

World Cultures Club:

The World Cultures Club is a unique experience, offering exposure to the ways of life in foreign societies. The club promotes the embracing of these cultures in the form of food for thought. (both literal and figurative) Join today!

Student Contact: Ty Limpasuvan

INTRODUCTIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduction of committee members and PTSO board.

Aug 12th Freshman Orientation please RSVP

Please submit Parent/Student surveys by Friday July 25th

SA building interior has been repainted and minor repairs taking place to SA building over summer break

COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

- Morgan Sellers gave a brief overview of the school vs program committees goals and review of what they have covered
 - History of SA
 - Grading policy
 - Graduation requirements
 - Junior Marshals / VAL / SAL
 - Palmetto Fellows and Life Scholarships – what would happen if SA kids were removed from base schools
 - Scholarships offered for VAL/ SAL
 - The outcome of school vs program for SA would affect the other programs in Horry County (STEM, etc)
 - No recommendations have been made to the board as of yet, but that is the goal of the committee

Committee has requested a list of activities SA students are involved in at base schools and possible reasons

QUESTIONS

- *Will this decision impact class rank and graduation for students currently enrolled at SA?*

Mrs. Allen stated that any decision made by the Board would not go into effect for any students, including rising 9th graders, already enrolled at SA.
- *Should SA become a stand- alone school, would the students still be able to play sports and participate in activities at their base school?*

High School League rules say they can participate in sports at the school in their attendance area. Mrs. Allen stated that students may also participate in honor societies, clubs, etc. at ~~other~~ their base schools if their school does not offer those clubs.
(Participation will also be dependent upon transportation and scheduling availability.)

- *Could SA give up VAL/SAL title at base schools? Would this be a compromise?*

VAL/SAL is a numeric ranking. Currently Latin Honors System is in place but district still recognizes VAL/SAL. Discussion--SA students feel they deserve the title if they earn it BUT some voiced concern that the naming of VAL/SAL not the issue but who actually addressed the graduates at the ceremony. Many felt SA would give up the speaking but would want to be ranked per the grades they earned. Students who are very actively engaged in base schools want the chance to be VAL/SAL AND speak at graduation.

- *What are the benefits for SA students if we were to become a stand-alone school?*

SA would be ranked as a school and would thus be publically recognized for some of the accomplishments of its students. It would also alleviate some of the workload for adults at both SA and base schools in terms of communication, record-keeping, scheduling, etc.

- *Would funding for SA be impacted?*

Mrs. Allen said it would not be unless student enrollment declined.

- *What is the force behind this move? Who initiated it?*

This conversation is the result from a push from base school parents. It was not initiated by SA staff/parents or the Horry County District staff. Discussion began as issues were raised with SA National Honor Society.

- *Is there a way we can compromise to avoid this change?*

There was a lot of discussion concerning this topic.

- *Can we survey SA students? Ask them whether they care about speaking at base school graduations and ask them to list the base school activities in which they participate. Ask them would they have chosen to attend SA if it were a stand-alone school.*

Survey to be developed and distributed by July 24th.

COMMENTS

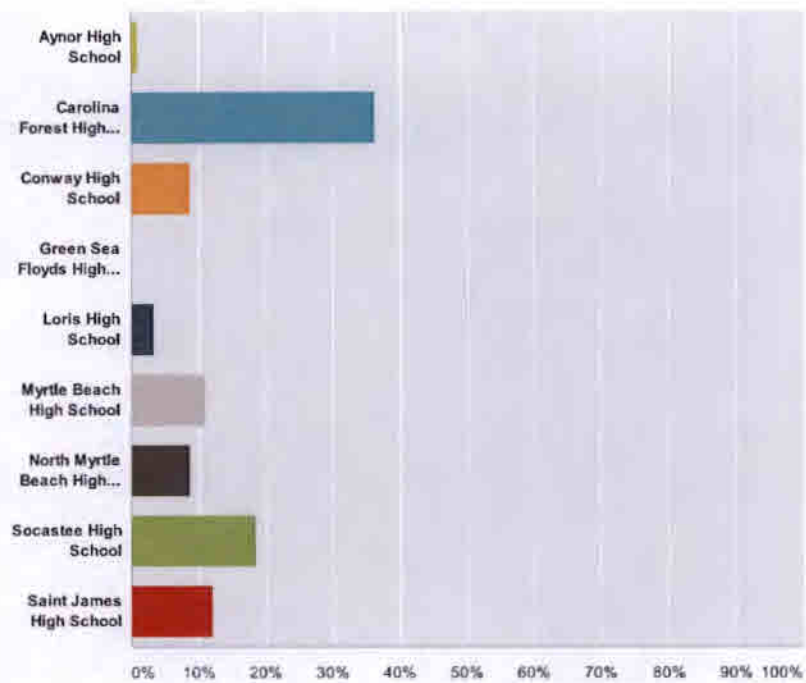
- There was a lot of discussion concerning class rank and the damage it would do to SA students if the Board made SA a stand-alone school.
- A number of parents were worried that making SA a stand-alone school would negatively impact the collaborative nature of SA by making the students compete against one another for class rank.
- One parent pointed out that some scholarship programs and other opportunities such as the Jefferson Scholars program at the University of VA only allow schools to select one student to apply.

- Everyone has an opportunity to apply for the SA. Students who choose not to attend SA choose to forgo some of its benefits.
- There is a misperception that SA students are not involved at their base schools.
- An alumnus of the program pointed out that it is possible to be valedictorian or salutatorian by attending the base high school. Attendance at SA is not a guarantee of attaining those positions.
- One parent addressed the fact that this was becoming emotional in the community. She also stated that some guidance counselors that she knows claim that communication is very difficult with SA. She also said that SA students are considered outsiders by their base schools.
- Mr. Poston from the Board said that this is a cyclical issue because every four years or so we have a new set of parents and new people on the school board.
- It was suggested the district determine how many students retain their Palmetto and Life scholarships. (This is impossible without contacting each individual student.)
- Parent concern was also stated that the outcome of this decision will also impact the STEM program at AAST.
- One parent asked if the committee was limited to two choices – stand-alone or remain as a program – or could it recommend other options.
- One parent stated that we should not treat STEM and SA the same because they are totally different. STEM will become a much larger program than SA.
- One parent stated that VAL/SAL was important to the students, but speaking at graduation is not important.

Student Survey #2

Q1 Please select your base high school.

Answered: 91 Skipped: 0

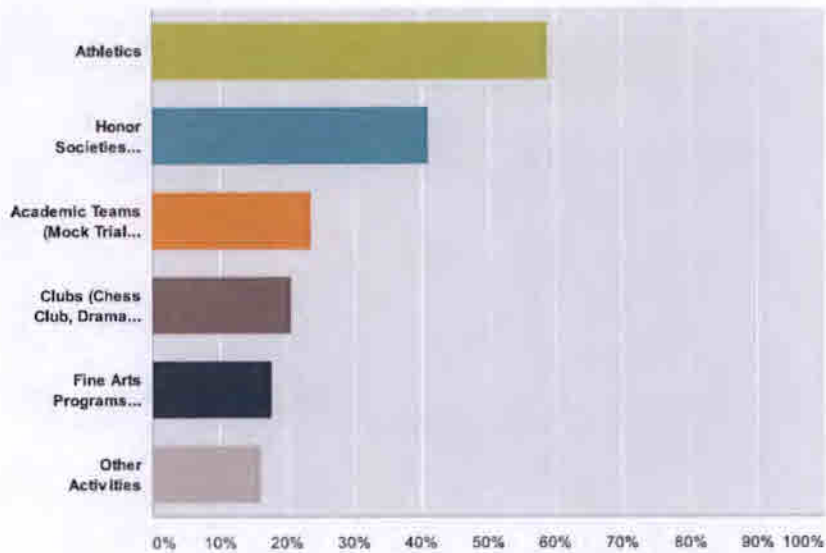


Answer Choices	Responses	
Aynor High School	1.10%	1
Carolina Forest High School	36.26%	33
Conway High School	8.79%	8
Green Sea Floyds High School	0.00%	0
Loris High School	3.30%	3
Myrtle Beach High School	10.99%	10
North Myrtle Beach High School	8.79%	8
Socastee High School	18.68%	17
Saint James High School	12.09%	11
Total		91

Student Survey #2

Q2 What activities do you participate in at your base high school? Please select all that apply.

Answered: 68 Skipped: 23



Answer Choices	Responses
Athletics	58.82% 40
Honor Societies (English, Mu Alpha Theta, and so on)	41.18% 28
Academic Teams (Mock Trial Team, Model UN, and so on)	23.53% 16
Clubs (Chess Club, Drama Club, and so on)	20.59% 14
Fine Arts Programs (Marching Band, Orchestra, and so on)	17.65% 12
Other Activities	15.18% 11
Total Respondents: 68	

#	Comments	Date
1	I am a rising 9th grader and I anticipate continuing these activities at Socastee.	7/28/2014 4:40 PM
2	I am very active in many, if not most things for students at CHS. I attend their prom and athletic events, and am still very involved with my base school.	7/27/2014 1:11 AM
3	I feel that if the Scholar's Academy becomes a stand alone school, they should have to offer all sports and clubs so that students do not feel excluded for having to participate in some activities at Scholar's or at their high school.	7/26/2014 8:53 PM
4	none	7/26/2014 7:45 PM
5	As a rising freshman, I have not joined any clubs yet. I was very active in clubs at my middle school, and I plan to join several at the high school level too.	7/26/2014 12:56 PM
6	Sporting and community service events	7/26/2014 11:20 AM
7	In my time at Scholars Academy I was fortunate to be part of the English Honor Society at my base school. Program students were some of the most consist members in this organization, which was basically just starting at my base school. I would have liked to be part of other groups, such as Academic Team, but was unable to due to my family situation.	7/25/2014 1:07 PM
8	Being able to participate in activities at the base school after school is great for SA students. We are able to pursue an education we may not be able to get at other programs or our base schools while being able to be connected to our base school through activities. I can personally say that being apart of activities at my base school allows me to keep friendships I may have lost if Scholars were it's own school when I enrolled into the program.	7/25/2014 2:29 AM
9	I regularly attend sporting events does that count? Also scholars should retain the right to go to prom because that's a unique experience and one that is and should be entirely different from the winter dances the scholars academy holds. If you start telling kids they won't be able to attend prom at the high school on their own accord, you can expect enrollment to drop significantly, because that's a big part of the "high school experience" that the scholars academy has been promising to include students in.	7/24/2014 11:52 PM
10	I would like to know if scholars academy would create their own athletic program if they were a stand alone school.	7/24/2014 9:46 PM
11	I don't personally participate in activities at my base high school, but I am not (at all) the representative of all Scholars students. ALL of my friends take part in base school activities. It's unfair that we're being penalized because base school individuals are upset that we're reaping the benefits of our hard work.	7/24/2014 9:05 PM

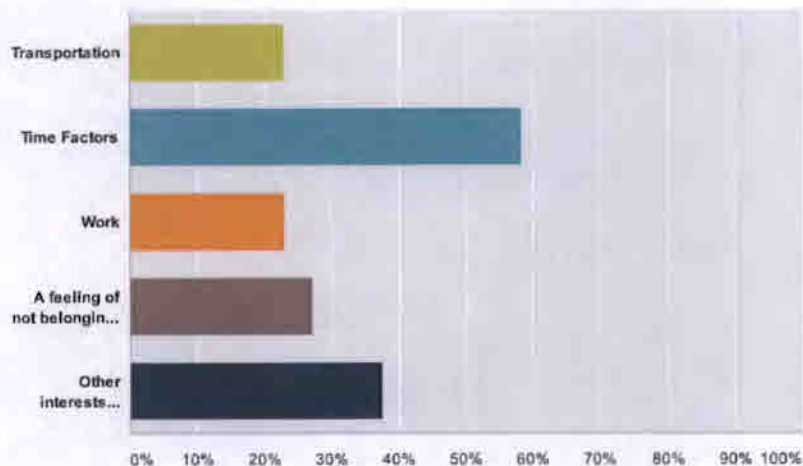
Student Survey #2

12	I was on my school's robotics team. I would have participated in more activities, but I had various schedule conflicts.	7/24/2014 9:03 PM
13	I am not currently old enough to participate in honor societies at my base school, but I do plan to participate in my future years of high school.	7/24/2014 8:20 PM
14	I do cheerleading, competitive cheerleading, and plan on joining Math honor society	7/24/2014 8:03 PM
15	I do not attend any activities at my base school.	7/24/2014 5:50 PM
16	Tennis team, beta club.	7/24/2014 3:10 PM
17	none	7/24/2014 3:08 PM
18	I only ride their buses.	7/24/2014 2:11 PM

Student Survey #2

Q3 If you do not participate in activities at your base high school, what are the reasons?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 43



Answer Choices	Responses
Transportation	22.92% 11
Time Factors	58.33% 28
Work	22.92% 11
A feeling of not belonging at my base high school	27.08% 13
Other Interests outside of school	37.50% 18
Total Respondents: 48	

#	Comments	Date
1	There aren't any activities I want to participate in that the scholars academy does not offer,	7/28/2014 1:58 PM
2	I participate.	7/27/2014 6:59 PM
3	I'm often already busy doing things related to Scholars, so it's hard to find time to participate at a school I don't attend.	7/27/2014 12:44 PM
4	Spend two horrible hours commuting home due to bus limitations, despite living within 15min of the school! Exhausting enough already.	7/27/2014 11:25 AM
5	I do, I play varsity volleyball and varsity basketball.	7/26/2014 10:49 PM
6	Adjustment to scholar's life during freshman year	7/26/2014 7:45 PM
7	The activities at the base school are great for interaction with students that share the base high school. It allows students (SA in participants in particular) to interact with people who share the base highschool and gives the students many opportunities to participate in sport and activities.	7/26/2014 2:36 PM
8	I do participate in activities, though.	7/25/2014 2:29 PM
9	As stated in the previous comment, I had issues with transportation and time. I also felt like I was not part of my base school. This was both student and staff based, however, since as a Junior Marshall several comments were made at graduation practice towards the valedictorian (who was part of this program) that I perceived as rude. In order to get more students involved from the Scholars Academy program, open it up. My base school is now making a connection between this program and the school for the next academic year. I believe this is a great step to try and get students more involved with there school, to cheer for being part at pep rallies and become not only members, but assets, to base school clubs.	7/25/2014 1:07 PM
10	One of the main reasons it can be difficult to participate in base school activities is because base school activities are not always accommodating to students from other schools. Many activities are not scheduled at times where students can commute to the base school and engage in them. Also, many activities are not communicated well to SA students. I do not think there is any animosity on the part of the other students, and I feel just like any other CFHS student when I participate in these activities.	7/24/2014 10:44 PM
11	I plan on participating in athletics this up coming year.	7/24/2014 10:14 PM
12	Schedule conflicts	7/24/2014 9:03 PM
13	None	7/24/2014 6:00 PM
14	Mainly, all of the clubs I truly care about are located at the scholars academy. Although we have duplicate clubs at the base high school, if I really wanted to go to a club like one they have I would simply try to create a new one at scholars.	7/24/2014 4:48 PM

Student Survey #2

15	With the 2013-2014 school year, many clubs were established at Scholars. With this explosion of available extracurriculars at Scholars since my freshman year, I have become increasing more involved at Scholars and less involved at NMBH. For some extracurriculars, I have chosen to transfer membership to Scholars and away from NMBH because I feel more comfortable and welcome at Scholars versus at NMBH.	7/24/2014 3:38 PM
16	I do participate.	7/24/2014 3:10 PM
17	I participate in activities at my base school	7/24/2014 2:03 PM

Student Survey #2

Q4 In the space below, please describe how you feel when you attend an activity or participate in an activity at the base high school.

Answered: 81 Skipped: 10

#	Responses	Date
1	I feel like I am actually part of something bigger than me. I feel important to a very high degree.	7/28/2014 6:23 PM
2	I am a rising 9th grader, so I do not know yet.	7/28/2014 4:40 PM
3	I have a sense of pride for my base school.	7/28/2014 2:05 PM
4	I have never been to my base school.	7/28/2014 1:58 PM
5	I do not attend base high school activities due to the fact that I prefer to do non-school related activities outside of school. Being I have never attended any base high school functions I do not know how I would feel if I attended. If I had to take a guess I believe I would talk to the people I did in middle school or other scholar's Academy teens who are going to the same activity and I would feel like I am attending an activity. There would be no difference in feeling of going to a random event at market commons to an event at the base high school because you are there to participate in an activity and will be doing that activity along with everybody else.	7/27/2014 9:33 PM
6	I love participating in base high school activities. Many of my friends from my middle school participate in them with me. It makes me feel as though I can still have the "High School Experience".	7/27/2014 9:23 PM
7	I feel welcomed. Playing sports and being in NHS is a good way for me to reconnect with my friends. I don't feel treated any differently at all.	7/27/2014 6:59 PM
8	Completely engaged, but at the same time, I am always aware that I go to a different school.	7/27/2014 12:44 PM
9	Better transportation after school. My parents work to support our family. Unless you have family that lives in the area, or parents who don't work, it's very inconvenient.	7/27/2014 11:25 AM
10	I do not feel any different than if I was participating in an activity at scholars. I've known my fellow students for quite some time and maintain friendships with some of them, thus I feel accepted when returning to Myrtle Beach.	7/27/2014 10:54 AM
11	When I participate in a sport or attend an activity at my base school, I feel like the same person I do when I attend Scholars--nothing more, nothing less. I have many, many friends still at my base school, and still consider myself a CHS Tiger even at Scholars.	7/27/2014 1:11 AM
12	I start for both the high school basketball and volleyball teams. I feel like part of the school family on these teams.	7/26/2014 10:49 PM
13	When I participate in an activity at my base school, it gives me the feeling of belonging to that school and gives me a group of friends outside of the ones at the Scholar's Academy.	7/26/2014 8:53 PM
14	Like there are a bunch of people, making a lot of noise, and whom I don't particularly care for (unless they're friends of mine).	7/26/2014 7:45 PM
15	When I visit my base high school, it's usually very interesting and fun: you see other students who you've known since Middle School and you are able to connect with them through sports or other activities. Spending school hours at the SA program, it's nice to work with others that come from the same base high school.	7/26/2014 2:36 PM
16	As a rising freshman, I can't answer this question yet. I think everything will be fine. I have a lot of friends at my base school. I am also very outgoing.	7/26/2014 12:56 PM
17	I am not treated differently than any other high schooler by coaches or teachers, other than them being understanding of the extra time and effort it takes me to get things done for the base school. However, I like to be involved so I am not separated from my peers at the base school.	7/26/2014 11:20 AM
18	I still have a sense that I am a part of my base school in some capacity. It makes me feel like I am not completely separated from everyone else.	7/26/2014 10:50 AM
19	Out of place	7/25/2014 9:04 PM
20	I enjoyed seeing people I went to middle school with but there was definitely an amount of awkwardness because I was not involved with a lot of things at my base school. It was more self-inflicted than anything and I liked the activities I was a part of.	7/25/2014 6:34 PM
21	I feel like I don't want to be there. I would rather be at the Scholars Academy.	7/25/2014 5:19 PM
22	I feel a little out of place and shy because I don't know anyone at my base school, and they don't make any effort to talk to me. However, that's fine because I don't make an effort to talk to them, either. I have all the friends I need at scholars, and I almost feel like I'm supposed to live up to something I'm not when I'm at the base school, and I don't like that feeling. When I'm playing a sport, I focus on performing well there, rather than making friends, and that works for me.	7/25/2014 2:29 PM
23	While attending activities and participating at my base school, I was able to feel like a "teenager." It also allowed me to stay connected to my friends from middle school, whether it was pep rallies, football games, show choir shows, etc. However, as answered previously, I felt like I was not wanted, almost like the room became tense when scholars students entered it. I wish I could say this was only a student issue, but it was not. I wish to see that there is a better connection, that program students are accepted as part of their school, not as outsiders. The issue of feeling like outsiders will be fixed once people stop seeing Scholars students as others and start seeing them as valued members.	7/25/2014 1:07 PM
24	I feel very much out of place when I attend activities such as pep rallies at my base high school.	7/25/2014 12:11 PM
25	I feel not wanted there and like an outsider, people smirk and whisper about me and Scholars when they see me in the hallways.	7/25/2014 8:42 AM
26	I have several friends at my base school. They make me feel welcome. However, at times, I may not receive the necessary information that is given to all other students in my group.	7/25/2014 8:30 AM

Student Survey #2

27	I'm a part of a team when I participate in sports at my base high school. I play with the people who I promised I'd spend the next two more years with them. I've created bonds with them and established trust between us. Making Scholars it's own school would sever the connection of having the same base high school and being able to talk about it.	7/25/2014 7:50 AM
28	When attending and/or participating in activities at my base school, I feel happy. I'm happy that I get to do things I love (lacrosse and drama). These activities are also a nice way to relax after leaving Scholars, which makes me feel calm.	7/25/2014 2:29 AM
29	I have friends at my base school that I keep in touch with regularly, so I feel included within my circles.	7/25/2014 12:28 AM
30	When I attend an activity at my base school, I generally feel happy to be able to connect with the friends I have there and grateful that I have to opportunity to support them and my base school in athletic endeavors despite going to scholars. I'm proud of my base school and always enjoy attending football games, soccer games, and pep rallies with the friends I have there.	7/24/2014 11:52 PM
31	I feel normal. The first time was weird but that's how it is with new experiences. I have some really nice base school friends.	7/24/2014 10:47 PM
32	The ability to participate in base school activities was very important in making my decision to attend SA. I truly enjoy participating in activities like tennis and Mock Trial. The students at CFHS are my friends and peers, and I enjoy the opportunity to spend time with them. Being an SA student does not make me feel ostracized or out of place. I don't believe that many people outside SA understand the number activities that we participate in or the willingness to participate in activities if it is feasible.	7/24/2014 10:44 PM
33	I feel like I'm at a public event with friends.	7/24/2014 10:37 PM
34	When I attend an activity or participate in an activity at the base high school, I feel as though I can still be active with my friends at my base high school. Also, it helps me involved in my community.	7/24/2014 9:46 PM
35	I feel pretty good because I am having a good time.	7/24/2014 9:26 PM
36	I've participated in the Junior Marshal ceremony, and I felt welcomed by my fellow students and the administration. The actual ceremony practice felt hostile because of a lack of communication, but that feeling was shared by students of Scholars and of the base school. I had one girl come up to the Scholars students and apologize that we were being treated the way we were, because we had come to help out people that we didn't even know, and she didn't feel that we were being treated fairly, so she apologized on behalf of her school. The students were all very kind and I knew most of my fellow Marshals.	7/24/2014 9:05 PM
37	It is a great feeling to support my base school and see old friends.	7/24/2014 9:03 PM
38	Not Applicable	7/24/2014 8:56 PM
39	When I go to sports practices at the base school, it's nice to be able to still interact with and be able to talk to some of the students that I do not get to see regularly at Scholars whom I went to middle school with. It allows me to keep up with news and meet more students who live near me. I really enjoy going to practice at the base school, because it allows me to play my sport with a different group of friends who I do not get to see that often, who I have a special bond with. Practicing at the base school helps me to feel more like a part of the Socastee student body, because I'm representing that school whenever we travel to other schools for games. Attending practice at the base school also makes me feel more outgoing and positive because I don't necessarily know all the players too well at the start, but can still bond with them when playing the sport. Practicing at the base school really helps me to be a team player as well because I am able to attend all pre-season conditioning sessions and am able to connect with others through the tough workouts and challenges faced throughout the season.	7/24/2014 8:20 PM
40	I get to see all of the friends I've known since elementary and middle school, and we are all one big family in the marching band. I feel like I belong in the activity, especially since I've been an active member going on three years. Most of all, I love supporting the Braves by performing at football games.	7/24/2014 8:06 PM
41	I feel like I can connect with kids I knew from middle school as well as be a part of something meaningful and fulfilling to me.	7/24/2014 8:03 PM
42	Mock trial is one of the most important aspects in my life right now. As you may know, last year, my team finished second in the nation. Attending this activity at the base high school is a necessity.	7/24/2014 7:50 PM
43	I feel happy and like I belong.	7/24/2014 7:25 PM
44	Excited to see my friends I have kept from Middle School and ready to cheer on my friends in all their activities	7/24/2014 7:25 PM
45	I like to see my friends from middle school. And I still like to support Socastee	7/24/2014 7:24 PM
46	Excluded, uninformed	7/24/2014 7:18 PM
47	I know the people who are there. They're nice to me just like family as if I didn't even leave at all.	7/24/2014 7:16 PM
48	I will be an upcoming freshman at Scholars this year. I feel welcomed at activities right now. I don't think that everyone doesn't like me just because I go to the Scholars Academy.	7/24/2014 6:58 PM
49	When I participate in activities at a base school I feel as of the people at the base school are my friends, and those at scholars are my family. Both are an important part of my life.	7/24/2014 6:15 PM
50	During activities at my base school, I feel distant from the people around me because I don't know many people there anymore. I also feel more distant because I generally participate at the scholars academy activities rather than the base schools.	7/24/2014 6:13 PM
51	It doesn't affect me. I feel accepted.	7/24/2014 6:01 PM
52	I feel warmly welcomed and accepted. The comradery is nice and is something I look forward to every day.	7/24/2014 6:00 PM
53	I do not attend any activities at my base school.	7/24/2014 5:50 PM
54	I can do whatever I want, but I always feel like the schools are separate.	7/24/2014 5:44 PM
55	I like reuniting with my old classmates and I feel happy to see and spend time with them	7/24/2014 5:13 PM
56	I feel just like any other NMBHS student. Teams and clubs foster a family like relation between all participants, usually people from different grades or classes. I am well connected at my highschool so people know I go to SA but it doesn't change the dynamics if anything.	7/24/2014 5:11 PM
57	I feel like a regular student and do not feel alienated at all.	7/24/2014 5:07 PM
58	If alone I feel out of place. If with a companion or two I feel just like everyone else.	7/24/2014 4:48 PM
59	I normal don't, but if I had to I would really know anybody (I was only at my base school for a year).	7/24/2014 4:47 PM
60	A sense of sentimentality between people I used to know, but also a worry	7/24/2014 4:47 PM

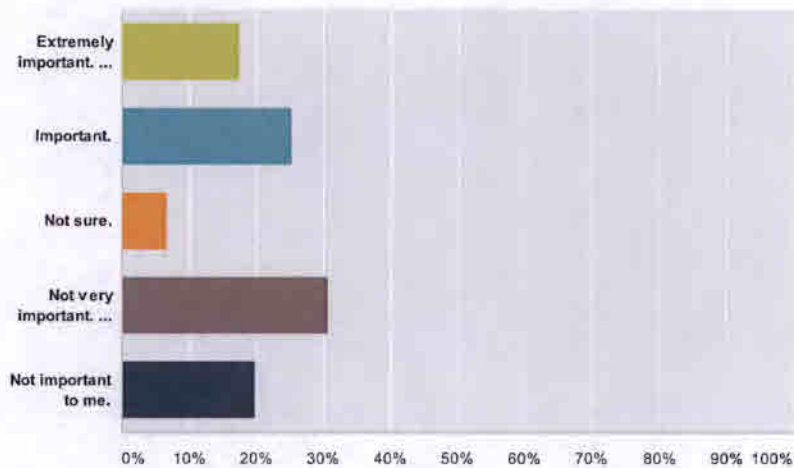
Student Survey #2

61	Enjoy being part of a team and look forward to doing it on a regular basis.	7/24/2014 4:31 PM
62	It keeps me in touch with the people I've known since elementary school, my first friends.	7/24/2014 4:27 PM
63	When attending events at my base school, I feel as though it is the awkward first day of school again. The students aren't any different than they were at the end of middle school, but after three years, we've all moved on. I rarely talk with people at my base school and end up flocking with fellow Scholars students at meetings and pep rallies at my base school.	7/24/2014 3:38 PM
64	It helps me feel connected to friends I do not get to see during the school day. It's a way to still spend time with friends that did not go to scholars. They never make me feel like an outsider, because I've been going to school with them for years.	7/24/2014 3:20 PM
65	I do not like the kind of people at my base school, so I choose not to affiliate myself with them.	7/24/2014 3:13 PM
66	I don't want to because I don't care for their events. (other than what I already participate in)	7/24/2014 3:10 PM
67	Out of place; while it is technically my high school, I don't consider it my high school, and I don't know anyone there.	7/24/2014 3:08 PM
68	It's fine.	7/24/2014 2:55 PM
69	Depends on the activity	7/24/2014 2:53 PM
70	Even though I may enjoy the activity, I still feel somewhat distant from the other base school kids. I am considered to be an outsider, and struggle to complete the activity without having to stay up extremely late at night in order to do homework. Other base school kids who also participate in such an activity do not have this problem, as their work load is much lighter, meaning they are not as considerate about time as I myself may be. On a different note, the activities I participate are the only connections I have with the base school. I have a friend or two who I am able to catch up with.	7/24/2014 2:44 PM
71	It feels different interacting with base school peers and scholars peers. I feel more comfortable surrounded by those who attend scholars.	7/24/2014 2:41 PM
72	A little left out of the loop because we don't know what we happening	7/24/2014 2:39 PM
73	I feel like I am not connected with the people there.	7/24/2014 2:37 PM
74	I feel great and spirited. Since that is my base school you are more welcomed and less ostracized by friends at the base school.	7/24/2014 2:35 PM
75	I participate in athletics at my base school, by doing so it allows me to interact and associate with people that I most likely wouldn't other wise know. I enjoy participating at my base school and would perhaps feel excluded if I were not able to do so. I like to know that I always have the opportunity to participate and interact with my base school.	7/24/2014 2:17 PM
76	Feels good to be a part of a team along with the friends I have trained with for years.	7/24/2014 2:15 PM
77	I don't mind being there...but my 9th grade year was my first year being a "student" of Conway high school so it has no meaning to me. If my base were still North Myrtle Beach I would spend a lot more time at the school and I would enjoy the pep rallies more.	7/24/2014 2:11 PM
78	I feel out of place. It's very uncomfortable and awkward. I chose not to go to CFHS for a reason and that's because I didn't belong there. I would rather not go to anything at all at my base school.	7/24/2014 2:09 PM
79	I feel connected to my friends still at MBHS, and I feel like I'm part of a family. I have many friends at Myrtle Beach and after-school activities are practically my only chance to talk to them. They also allow me to catch up on news and stories going through the school.	7/24/2014 2:03 PM
80	I feel welcomed and enjoy being with my friends who do not attend Scholars with me. Generally, I am not looked at differently because I attend Scholars.	7/24/2014 2:03 PM
81	I feel included, and I enjoy participating in activities at my base school. It helps keep me connected to people who I would otherwise be cut off with.	7/24/2014 1:58 PM

Student Survey #2

Q5 Our current district policies dictate that the valedictorian, salutatorian, and one other student speak at the base high school graduation ceremonies; however, this policy can be changed by the School Board. How important is the opportunity to speak at the base high school graduation to you?

Answered: 91 Skipped: 0

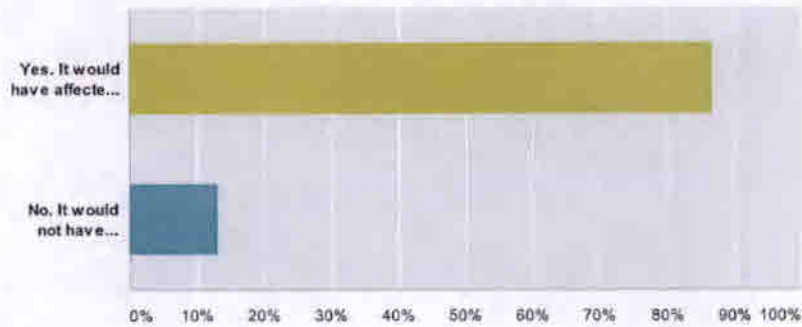


Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important. I would not have chosen to attend the Scholars Academy if this were not an option.	17.58%	16
Important.	25.27%	23
Not sure.	6.59%	6
Not very important. It would not have affected my decision to attend the Scholars Academy.	30.77%	28
Not important to me.	19.78%	18
Total		91

Student Survey #2

Q6 If Scholars Academy had been a stand-alone high school with class ranking calculated only within the Scholars Academy senior class, would it have affected your decision to apply? Why or why not?

Answered: 91 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes. It would have affected my decision to apply.	86.81% 79
No. It would not have affected my decision to apply.	13.19% 12
Total	91

#	Why or Why not?	Date
1	It wouldn't affected my decision because all of those rankings are for people to say "hey look at me and how good i have done". I really think that puts the other people who got just under their score down.	7/28/2014 6:23 PM
2	It would punish the students who have chosen a more rigorous academic path. There is no attendance area for SA, so SA students would be predominantly and negatively affected if it were a stand alone school. There is no benefit for any SA student for SA to become a stand alone school, only disadvantage.	7/28/2014 4:40 PM
3	It would basically pin all the smartest students in Horry County against each other for two different titles. I would rather go for valedictorian and salutatorian at my base school, against students who may not be as smart as me.	7/28/2014 2:05 PM
4	I would not have rejected the opportunity to receive a superior education just for the possibility of having a higher class rank	7/28/2014 1:58 PM
5	It would have effected my decision to apply because I know that I may be smart enough to get into the Scholar's Academy but would not be the top person in the school. If it was stand alone I may have attended and then choose to switch to the base high school so that my school rank would not look as bad. Being i am probably in the lower 50% of my scholar's academy class my college applications would be greatly hindered by that fact. Colleges get tons of applications and trying to explain your special situation as to why your in the bottom half of your class will only work at a few colleges.	7/27/2014 9:33 PM
6	Because many titles and scholarships only go to the top five or ten percent of students. Out of my base high school that is about 30 out of Scholar's Academy that is about 7.	7/27/2014 9:23 PM
7	Yes because it would force us all to compete against each other for ranking, GPA, collegiate appeal, instead of us all working together and helping each other out. This decision to put SA students against each other would ruin the school. Also, a child who could have been in the top 5 at their base school, may be forced to put 35/40 if this decision was made, which in turn, would turn away colleges.	7/27/2014 6:59 PM
8	My goal in coming to Scholars was to learn more and challenge myself. Class ranking never crossed my mind when applying. I'm more concerned with becoming a better student than just being able to say "I was number one or two in my class." I feel that becoming a better student is vastly more important in the long run.	7/27/2014 12:44 PM
9	I think it would only be advantageous to base school only. My parents have already encountered poor attitudes from the transportation office regarding the lack of adequate transportation.	7/27/2014 11:25 AM
10	It would not have affected my decision to apply as I came to Scholars in order to be more challenged and to be able to explore many different areas of education through college classes.	7/27/2014 10:54 AM
11	I probably would not have applied because I would not have wanted to enter a school driven by competition for class rank and grades rather than cooperation and mutual learning. It was the LACK of competition that attracted me to the program the most.	7/27/2014 1:11 AM
12	I will be among the very top 1% of my class at Carolina Forest. This ranking impacts scholarships and valedictorian/salutatorian which are both very important to me. If my class ranking would be lost by going to scholars I would choose not to attend SA. There would be a built in disadvantage going there.	7/26/2014 10:49 PM
13	Had the Scholar's Academy been a stand alone school when I had the opportunity to apply, I wouldn't have. One of the things that drew me to the program was the closeness of the students and the bonding, and I feel that if class ranking were to be based on just the senior class at Scholar's, it would take away from the caring environment because it would acquire more of a "dog eat dog" and "every man for himself" ambience.	7/26/2014 8:53 PM

Student Survey #2

14	I've never been concerned with class ranking.	7/26/2014 7:45 PM
15	Scholars Academy- as a program- creates an environment that feeds personal, social and work-ethic growth. Even though the students come from different base high schools, we support one another to achieve and succeed. If it were a stand alone school, the energy and school structure would be damaged, and the idea of attending would not be the same.	7/26/2014 2:36 PM
16	A senior class at Scholars is much smaller than one at a base school. Wouldn't this affect my chances of receiving scholarships?	7/26/2014 12:56 PM
17	Because we are among the smartest kids in horry county at this school, senior year is going to come for students that stay in the program. This starts a lot of competition, possibly those which would begin animosity, and it also leaves those who are smart and do well, but not as well as those at the top of the ranking, to be left out of the chance to be a part of the top, which is absolutely possible at base schools.	7/26/2014 10:50 AM
18	Last year our lowest gpa ranking graduates were cum laude, it would be absolutely preposterous to have the lowest ranking student in a class in the 4.0 range, they would not qualify for scholarships that kids at the base school with the same gpa would	7/25/2014 9:04 PM
19	Class rank is important for colleges and scholarships, a stand alone high school changes that.	7/25/2014 7:20 PM
20	Due to the small class size and my knowledge now of ranking/scholarship awards, it would have been difficult to define my skills in such an elite group. I was able to maintain an equal status among my peers at the base school in a way that allowed my fellow students to succeed	7/25/2014 6:34 PM
21	I would have thought about it because if I'm say 7th for Scholars and not get any good scholarships. Unlike if it counted with my base high school where I'd probably be first and get a whole bunch.	7/25/2014 5:58 PM
22	I have always wanted to go to Scholars and it wouldn't change my mind.	7/25/2014 5:19 PM
23	I came to scholars to get the best education I could and the benefits that came with it were the best fit for me. There are more benefits for more students when class ranks are from the base school; there are more scholarship opportunities for more students when they're in the top 100 of 1200 rather than the top 10 of 50.	7/25/2014 2:29 PM
24	This year, the graduating class of Scholars Academy seniors was 26 students. Of those 26, all were eligible for Palmetto Fellows or Life Scholarships from the state, meaning they were top graduates of their base schools. However, if rankings were within Scholars Academy, one person will be number one and one will be number 26. Colleges don't seem to care that there are only 26, that you worked hard to be where you are. If you are 26 out of 26 then you are last. I have worked alongside those 26, and they are some of the most hard working people I have ever known, some more than others, but nonetheless. They wanted to achieve so much, and they worked hard for 4 years to get to senior ceremony. How can you tell someone who has received all As their high school career that they are, say, number 3 in their rank. 3 out of 26 is about 11% to 12%, making them ineligible by South Carolina and Horry County standards for several major scholarships. Recently an article came out that stated many students at the Scholars Academy graduate and leave the state. Out of the 26 that graduated this past June, only approximately 8 students are taking opportunities out of state. Yes, that is about an eighth of the class, but that also means 18 other students are staying in state. College is expensive, and if Scholars was its own stand alone school with internal rankings, the whole dynamic of Scholars, the cooperation, would cease to exist. Instead of a cooperation, it would become competition. The family setting that I have known and loved would disappear and Scholars Academy would no longer be a family. The motto, "Dare to Know," would no longer apply. Students would not learn anymore, they would memorize. They would ace, but they would not profit. If Scholars does become its own school, the traditional class rank system would not be able to apply to this program. Remember, someone has to be last- don't make someone who works hard be last because of class sizes.	7/25/2014 1:07 PM
25	If class rank was only based on the SA senior class, I feel that everyone would become much more competitive. We are able to work together so well mostly because we don't see each other as opponents. Changing the ranking system would force seniors to compete against each other. I would not have applied to enter SA if class rank was only based on my class.	7/25/2014 12:11 PM
26	I would never have applied to Scholars. I'm a gifted student but couldn't compete with the ranks of some of the other kids that are here at SA, and I wouldn't have gotten half of the scholarships I received if it was ranked within the scholars class.	7/25/2014 8:42 AM
27	I had two goals for high school: get into the Scholars Academy and join my sports team. If I wasn't able to do one of them, I didn't want to do the other.	7/25/2014 7:50 AM
28	This would have affected by decision to apply because while I do love the rigor of the program and learning, the competition that would take place for class ranks would be even worse than they are now with Scholars as a program and having us at our base schools. This is because Scholars Academy allows us (the students) support each other without freaking out over our class rank. The only people we are "competing" for in class ranks are the people who attend the same base school as us and the base school kids.	7/25/2014 2:29 AM
29	Because it would be extremely difficult to achieve a good ranking within the Scholars Academy and a lot of my relationships with my close friends would be extremely strained in such an environment.	7/25/2014 12:28 AM
30	Because while I stand at the top 1% of socastee high school, I suspect I wouldn't be anywhere near that if I was to be compared to kids at scholars, because the competition is much greater there. Also if that was the case I wouldn't be eligible for nearly as many state sponsored scholarships or awards to help further my education in college. I would not have attended if scholars had been it's own school at the time	7/24/2014 11:52 PM
31	Competing against other scholars would destroy the program and my scholarship chances. I would be better off at my base school.	7/24/2014 10:47 PM
32	As an 8th grader, I may not have fully understood the implications of that, but as a senior who understands the requirements of college applications, scholarships, etc. this is very important. Many scholarships and colleges consider class rank to be an important factor. If SA was a separate school, we would be severely disadvantaged. Last year, we had almost 30 students who were in junior marshals in a class that is only slightly larger. Each and every one of those students would be eligible for the vast majority of scholarships based on class rank, because they were in the top 5% of their class ranking. If SA was a separate school, 2 or 3 of those students would have a similar status in class rank.	7/24/2014 10:44 PM
33	It would have because I like to be able to have the opportunity to participate at my base school with sports and such. At the end of eighth grade I went to all these meetings saying that I won't have to miss out on my high school experience because I'll be able to participate with my base high school.	7/24/2014 10:37 PM
34	There are incentives to be in the top 5 and 10 percent of the class, which will be taken away for most of us since only 4 students make up the top 10 percent. Relationships between the students are stronger than to be broken by this added level of competition, yet it would add an unnecessary strain none the less.	7/24/2014 10:14 PM
35	It would have affected my decision to apply because I want to see how a Scholars Academy students rank compares with a normal high school students ranking, instead of with only Scholars Academy senior class.	7/24/2014 9:46 PM

Student Survey #2

36	I think my GPA could still contend with those at scholar's.	7/24/2014 9:26 PM
37	Scholars Academy is a school full of top achievers. Class rank is so important to admissions and to scholarships and to rank us within entire classes of top students is going to horribly impact everyone, especially those who end up being at the bottom, who may still have GPAs over 4.0. Everyone at Scholars is here because we work harder than most students. We earn our grades. Our teachers don't just hand out A's and we don't sit back and collect high scores. I and many of my fellow Scholars are furious that people want to penalize us for working hard and making excellent grades. To pit us against each other in a battle of GPAs is beyond cruel, and I am horrified that is even being suggested. The notes from the meeting on July 21st note that this entire discussion is being pushed by base school parents who seem to have taken offense that we are seemingly being favored over their children, which isn't true. If they want their students to succeed as we do, it is entirely possible to do so. They will have to work as hard as we do, but it can be done even at their base schools.	7/24/2014 9:05 PM
38	I would have felt that I was placing myself at a disadvantage when applying to colleges and scholarships.	7/24/2014 9:03 PM
39	If Scholars was its own school with class ranking calculated only within the Scholars senior class, it would have affected my decision to apply because if class rank was only within the Scholars Academy, the opportunities for college scholarships and opportunities would not be as great. I'm approximately number 2 in my class at my base school currently, but would be probably ranked in the teens at least if it were only within the Scholars Academy. Honestly, I'm working as hard as I can work right now. The reason I came to Scholars was to challenge myself and to help earn an education resulting in greater opportunities for my future, not to make it impossible for me to succeed. I feel like if Scholars had a rank system, my whole education would turn into a competition. The Scholars Academy already consists of the "best and brightest" of the county; if a rank system was put into place, I feel as if even more pressure would be put on grades and test scores, and I honestly don't know if I could handle that extra stress.	7/24/2014 8:20 PM
40	Considering the most recent graduating class only consisted of 26 students, only a few would have been awarded scholarships based on class rank. I would've felt like it would be too much competition to handle, creating an unsupportive environment. For example, the LIFE scholarship requires the applicant to rank in the top 30% of their class. Out of 26 students, only 7 or 8 out of the entire class would qualify. On the same note, the Palmetto Fellows scholarship is only awarded to the top 6% of the class, equating to only a mere 1 to 2 students. Under the current arrangement of the program, most, if not all, of the seniors qualify for said scholarships.	7/24/2014 8:06 PM
41	Class rank is something that is very important to me and I would not have to risk losing some scholarship opportunities because of it.	7/24/2014 8:03 PM
42	I did not chose to attend a privatized academy. I chose to attend a school in which my academic achievements are shared with my base high school.	7/24/2014 7:50 PM
43	The problem with class ranking in the Scholars Academy would mean that there would be a top and bottom of the ranking of intelligent students. The person on the bottom would be at the bottom at Scholars, but at their base school, they would be at the top. This would interfere with scholarships. The student would be worthy of excellent scholarships, but since he/she is at the bottom of a very competitive and intelligent class ranking, they would not be eligible. This problem would not occur if they were at their base school.	7/24/2014 7:25 PM
44	If scholars academy kids are competing together then even if you have an amazing GPA then you may still be 10th, 20th, or even 30th in your class which is very unfair to kids as smart as scholars kids	7/24/2014 7:25 PM
45	Because then I can't see my friends as much. And Scholars has no athletics programs.	7/24/2014 7:24 PM
46	If only a class of 30 or so people graduated by the end of senior year, it'd be a blood bath for scholarships and val/sal.	7/24/2014 7:18 PM
47	All of the opportunities for us would be nerfed really. Say it was a class of 23 and you were 23 you would get absolutely nothing even though you may be 1 or 2 in your base high school.	7/24/2014 7:16 PM
48	It would affect me because we won't be able to help each other because everyone will be competing with each other. It also won't look as good to colleges if you are 30 out of 50 scholars students (which is really good but colleges won't know that) rather than 9 out of 300 in the base schools. I personally think Scholars should not be a stand-alone high school.	7/24/2014 6:58 PM
49	It would highly affect my chance at getting scholarships. I would of had a better chance competing with my fellow students at the base school (no offense intended, but some people there do not care as much about academics as everyone at scholars does... Some prefer the fine arts or athletics).	7/24/2014 6:15 PM
50	I feel that it would affect my decision to apply because I would not be able to keep up with my fellow students as it is. My ranking at the base school is as low as it is, and making the scholars academy a stand alone school would make my ranking even worse.	7/24/2014 6:13 PM
51	When I applied to Scholars, earning valedictorian honors was important to me. Since then, my opinion has changed. Currently, it is not important because I realized attending Scholars hurt my chances of earning valedictorian.	7/24/2014 6:01 PM
52	It would lessen my opportunity for scholarship money. I wouldn't even consider SA if that were the case.	7/24/2014 6:00 PM
53	One reason I chose to attend the scholars academy was to be given better opportunities which come from being ranked based on my base school, if I was ranked based off of other scholars academy students I feel that a lot of these opportunities would become unavailable to me.	7/24/2014 5:50 PM
54	Why would I want to compete with people whose lives revolve around school? It's a much smarter decision to stay with the crowd where it is easiest to succeed.	7/24/2014 5:44 PM
55	It would change my position as a big fish in a big pond to a tiny fish in a small pond.	7/24/2014 5:11 PM
56	I would have been concerned that Scholars would make me look bad on college applications. It's bad enough GPAs are harder to maintain at Scholars, and if half the school starts being recognized as the lower 50 percent it would make Scholars students look even worse.	7/24/2014 5:07 PM
57	I do not believe it would be fair, it would turn the tables for us. Instead of being in the top of our school, it will appear that we are at the bottom. Such as the lowest scoring scholar student will seem to be in the bottom of his school, when really he is much farther in his base school.	7/24/2014 4:47 PM
58	I didnt care about rankings it was more about meeting people	7/24/2014 4:47 PM
59	I came to Scholars to be in a challenging environment in which I could flourish academically and socially. Over the last three years, I have accomplished these goals. In making my decision to come to Scholars, I was not concerned with valedictorian/salutatorian or with my GPA. It was the promise of a school that emphasized academic rigor through caring teachers, small class sizes, and the ability to determine your academic path through a wide array of available classes and not the benefits of more scholarship money, more college credits, and a better chance at receiving valedictorian/salutatorian titles that drew me to The Scholars Academy.	7/24/2014 3:38 PM

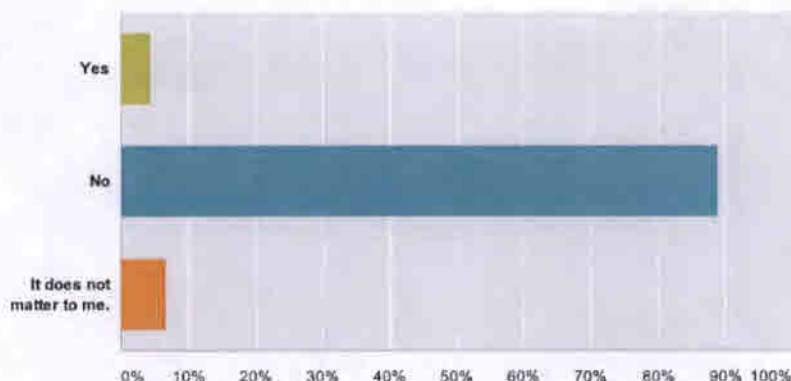
Student Survey #2

60	I probably still would have chosen scholars, but it would have been a very tough decision instead of an easy one. I've wanted to be valedictorian since I knew what it was. One reason scholars seems so great is because it's smart kids being challenged together and helping each other out. There is healthy competition that makes us strive to be better but it's not stressful. If ranking was calculated in scholars, the competition would be fierce, and the overall atmosphere of scholars would be changed. Instead of a camaraderie between the top 10 students, it would be vicious competition that would add another area of stress to the students, which is not something they need.	7/24/2014 3:20 PM
61	The people here are geniuses, and I cannot compete with them to get scholarships.	7/24/2014 3:13 PM
62	Pitting high-achieving students together in a ranking system would turn the place into a war zone. It would have decreased the probability of me applying.	7/24/2014 3:10 PM
63	It would not affect my decision to apply because it is still a great program, and I think that adding that competition would make us work harder.	7/24/2014 3:08 PM
64	Because colleges like high class ranks.	7/24/2014 2:55 PM
65	Excelling is excelling.	7/24/2014 2:53 PM
66	Yes, as it would have affected my decision to apply, as my class ranking may be deemed "poor" by some colleges, which may prevent me from not only gaining scholarships, but possibly may prevent me from really being considered an eligible candidate for some top universities. We work so hard at Scholars; being Junior Marshal at the base school is a reward that should not be taken away. Also, we are a FAMILY at Scholars. Class ranking within the Scholars Academy senior class would destroy this atmosphere, and Scholars, as a result, would never be the same.	7/24/2014 2:44 PM
67	It would cause a lot more competition within each grade and we would be placed lower at lower ranks.	7/24/2014 2:41 PM
68	Because at a school like scholars competition is already tight. I wouldn't want all my free time to be taken and kept focused on school.	7/24/2014 2:39 PM
69	I wouldn't get the same chances to get a scholarship as another base school student.	7/24/2014 2:37 PM
70	That would have been horrible. I doubt I would have wanted to attend scholars if that was the case. It would have been too competitive and made it harder to be successful. Scholars has the top people from the base schools generally so you would lose that and people who would be at the top would now seem not as smart since their rank would be low at scholars. It would ruin everything scholars stands for as long as family and helping each other goes.	7/24/2014 2:35 PM
71	It would significantly reduce my ability to obtain scholarships as I would rank out of 35 instead of 250+. The negates any importance of the program.	7/24/2014 2:34 PM
72	If this were the case at Scholars Academy it would have definitely affected my decision to apply. It would have been a concern but it may not have been reason to prevent me from applying. I would have considered how it would affect my academic career and how competitive it would cause students to be with one another. Though, I would have most likely still applied, I may have been more hesitant in doing so.	7/24/2014 2:17 PM
73	I participate in athletics and such a system would not allow to compete at the same level I do with my base school.	7/24/2014 2:15 PM
74	I wouldn't have applied at all. There are few seniors at Scholars compared to most others and it wouldn't be fair to them at all. We work hard enough as it is, making us compete against each other would be terrible. We wouldn't be as willing to help others and we wouldn't get any sleep because we would be working even harder every night.	7/24/2014 2:11 PM
75	You can't rank us against each other. ESPECIALLY during our senior year, I can guarantee you some of us would drop out during that year if we had to compete against each other. Why would I go to a school/ stay at a school where I would be 30/50 as opposed to 3rd at my base school?	7/24/2014 2:09 PM
76	I would not want to attend if I were not able to be part of my base school because I have been a student at Myrtle Beach since I was 5 years old and I would not sacrifice that for the sake of a school. Base schools offer high enough levels of academics that scholars would be too big of a change to make it worthwhile. I also participate in numerous school activities that would be unavailable to me if I attended a different school. Academics is not my entire life and it would have to be if I were solely a scholars student.	7/24/2014 2:03 PM
77	I know that class rank determines some scholarships and I want to have the best opportunity to receive those scholarships. My chances would be lessened if class ranking was calculated only within the graduating class at Scholars due to the competitive nature and smaller class size.	7/24/2014 2:03 PM
78	It would have made me think about it a bit more, because your rank is being calculated within such a small group, and being 10th out of 50 looks different than it would if you were 10th out of 300.	7/24/2014 1:58 PM
79	Having class rankings within scholars would cause a bloodbath.	7/24/2014 1:57 PM

Student Survey #2

Q7 In your opinion, should Scholars Academy become a stand-alone high school?

Answered: 91 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	4.40% 4
No	89.01% 81
It does not matter to me.	6.59% 6
Total	91

#	Comments	Date
1	The scholars academy already seems to function very similar to a "normal" school, just with greater academic intensity, a few fewer clubs, and bussing via base high schools. While there is the issue of class rank, it does seem unfair to rank scholars academy students alongside base school students when scholars students have both the advantage and disadvantage of having higher level coursework. Whether or not the scholars academy is called a stand alone high school doesn't matter to me. I already feel that scholars academy is my only high school, and I feel no association with Carolina Forest high school.	7/28/2014 1:58 PM
2	WORST IDEA EVER...THIS IS THE QUICKEST WAY TO RUIN THE PROGRAM...PLUS, THE DISTRICT WOULD BE WASTING \$8 MILLION IF THAT HAPPENED...	7/27/2014 6:59 PM
3	I definitely feel as though it should be a stand alone high school. I have heard many supposed benefits from the school remaining a program, but these arguments fail to address the main issue. The issue is over whether or not scholars should be its own school to begin with, not the current benefits of the program. To begin with, from a very simplistic viewpoint, I believe that it is very difficult to say that Scholars, for all practical purposes, isn't already its own school. Every morning I drive about 25 minutes to get there, and when I go home afterwards, I drive right passed the school I supposedly go to. We operate on an entirely different schedule than the other schools, have our own teachers, have our own building, and are perfectly self sufficient. This next semester, I will be taking 5 academic classes at Scholars and a grand total of 0 at Myrtle Beach. Why should I be classified as a myrtle beach student then? I have absolutely no involvement with the school on a day to day basis, take no classes there, only know 2 teachers there, and drive by it each day as I return from the school I actually attend. In light of all this, I find that labeling scholars a "program" ignores the day to day reality of it operating as its own school. Moving along, there are also arguments that say Scholars should remain a program in order for students to have adequate ability to participate in sports, music programs, and other extra curricular activities at their base schools. This is a perfectly legitimate concern, but I don't believe it justifies Scholars remaining a program. If Scholars were to become its own school, why not simply make an exemption allowing for people to participate in sports and music programs as they previously did? Scholars does not have the ability to fully offer these things, so students should be allowed to return to other schools to participate in them. However, scholars can certainly offer honors societies and field academic teams, so students can participate in those at scholars. Although extra curricular activities are important, I feel as though they are being used as nothing more than a guise to justify scholars remaining a program even when the academic situation should take precedent. In short, students need to be able to participate at base schools, but this is nothing that a simple exemption couldn't address, yielding to the fact that students take all of their core academic classes at Scholars. Lastly, much has been made of class rankings and how those tie into scholarship money. Many scholarships are awarded on a basis in some way including class ranking, so there is a very strong interest for students to do well in that regard. Currently, we are judged in the class rankings of our base high schools, which makes it much easier for Scholars students to be higher in their class rankings. Nonetheless, I feel that this situation is contradictory to various principles. As a student, I believe that I should be judged against the people I am in the same environment with. I think it's morally wrong for my fellow students to say "I want to be challenged and go to a school with difficult classes and smart kids like me, but I don't want to be judged against them." To me, that is hypocrisy. If we go to school together, take classes together, study together, listen together, and learn together, why should we be judged separately from each other? We should not be. We should be judged against ourselves. Why? Because that's what Scholars do. Scholars push each other. Scholars encourage each other. Scholars challenge each other to be the best they can be. If people went to scholars just to help their class rank or to boost their GPAs, I honestly believe that they shouldn't be here. Education is more than giving someone a piece of paper after 4 years. I feel completely confident that if I dedicate myself at Scholars and remain willing to learn, I will have no trouble with higher education. I get 5s on my AP exams, my GPA is very high, and with a successful SAT, I will get plenty of scholarships. I do not need to be gifted the title of valedictorian or salutatorian. I need a school, not a program. In closing, if scholars became its own school, it is likely I would not be number 1 in my school. But rest assured, my school would be number 1.	7/27/2014 12:44 PM

Student Survey #2

4	Students at Scholars work hard to achieve the results that they do. Students at base schools complain that "they do the same amount of work" as Scholar students, but that is not the case. If students at base schools are taking 2-3 AP classes a year, passing the exams, and taking 2-3 college classes a semester then by all means they are doing the same amount of work. The fact is, they don't. Everyone had the same chance to apply to be a part of Scholars in 8th grade and those who didn't and begin to regret it their senior year have no excuse. If Scholars Academy became a standalone high school, many scholarship opportunities from base schools would be lost. Would it be right to punish hard working students in order to allow others who didn't want to put in the time or effort to benefit? The way Scholars is set up now allows for all the students who put in the effort to reap the benefits that come with it. By making Scholars a standalone high school, we would be teaching the student of base schools that taking the easy road rather than the tough road doesn't matter as they would end up with the same results as Scholars students who took the tough road. In addition to this, the only thing looked at when ranking is the number- it matters not how close students were to each other, thus that would be the ultimate downfall of Scholars, a community of students who, many times, have ranks that come down to a hundredth of a decimal. In addition to this, many colleges won't look at the rigor of the high school thus placing a person ranked 10th at Scholars in the same bin as someone ranked 10th at the base school. If Scholars became a standalone high school it would only hurt the students who put in the effort and help those who took the easy road.	7/27/2014 10:54 AM
5	I cannot stress how much of a horrible idea I think this is. Not only is this idea poorly planned, but lacks legitimate foundation in the best interest of the students. This decision would essentially be harming the standing and scholarship opportunities of the most talented students in the county because they chose to step out in search of a challenge. Not only will Scholars lose enrollment and application rates if it were to become an independent school, but it would simply become an overall worse place to be.	7/27/2014 1:11 AM
6	I'm not sure of what the outcomes are (positive or negative) to us becoming a stand-alone school.	7/26/2014 7:45 PM
7	In my eyes (and of my peers), Scholars is a sanctuary that invites all students from various towns and cities in Horry County to grow and learn. They prepare you for college and your high school career. This being said, a stand alone high school would simply ruin the goal of Scholars Academy. Those who joined it (some of the best performing students in the county- after all, they are picked by scores and various other things) would compete against one another for such things (recognition, valedictorian, etc). Also, if we were to become a stand alone high school, there are many disadvantages. Extracurriculars would be limited. Despite our new building, we have no gym to support the practice meetings of sports teams or space for it.	7/26/2014 2:36 PM
8	I will be leaving if this happens. That is not a threat, but my set decision.	7/26/2014 10:50 AM
9	No, Scholars Academy was not created (in my opinion) to graduate students with a diploma. It was created to challenge excellent students in Horry County and prepare them for college. Becoming a stand alone high school takes away necessary ties to the community as well as creates an unproductively competitive atmosphere in the student body.	7/25/2014 6:34 PM
10	I would not care if it wasn't for how much scholarship money I'd receive.	7/25/2014 5:58 PM
11	While communication with the base schools is flawed, we can improve that. Students have more opportunities for scholarship money and VAL/SAL nomination as a program rather than a stand-alone school. Also, it benefits the base schools by bringing their test scores up and thus qualifying them for more grants and scholarships. I think the way we have things now is the best for all parties involved.	7/25/2014 2:29 PM
12	Make Scholars Academy a stand-alone school, then you will kill the program. Speaking with other students, making Scholars its own school would automatically remove at least half of the current enrolled students from the program. No one would want to go to a school where they are no longer important to a sense. Many students choose to go to Scholars Academy because they want to better themselves, but how can a competitive atmosphere foster learning? Many students feel lost at a big base school, and that's another reason why they will come to a smaller community. Scholars Academy is a diverse community, that's really it. A family. Ask most students, face to face, and they will tell you they feel like part of a family. Base schools consist of cliques of students, but Scholars consists of large cliques of people. The rising Senior class throughout the year gets together in one large group, going out to eat and to the beach. Most of those students would never have met each other if they had not come to Scholars, and most of them would not have come if Scholars was a stand-alone school. Making us a stand-alone school will destroy the program that makes Horry County ahead of its time, a place that students can get an edge they will work hard to deserve and be part of a larger community of athletes, academics, and friends. If Scholars Academy had been a stand-alone school, I may not have ever attended, and I would never have benefited from a group that helped me through so much. If you break us from base schools, then you break us from each other. Make us a stand-alone school and you break up a family.	7/25/2014 1:07 PM
13	absolutely not it would be the worst mistake Horry County Schools would ever make in its entire existence.	7/25/2014 8:42 AM
14	One of the largest and most influential benefits about going to Scholars is that we are given the opportunity to continue to keep up with our base school friends. If Scholars becomes stand-alone, we will lose the connection to many people that we've known our whole lives and we'd be seen as outcasts to our old social group. Not knowing anyone going into high school is frightening, but when we still have our base school friends, we don't feel alone.	7/25/2014 7:50 AM

Student Survey #2

15	<p>Scholars Academy was and is the best choice for me. I love SA a lot. The atmosphere here is the cozy and welcoming, something I wouldn't get at my base high school. Since Scholars is so small, I am able to have closer relationships with not only my classmates, but the upperclassmen as well. I chose Scholars because it was the place I felt at home. I'm glad I came. Sure, it's not all sunshine and roses all the time. We quamel, we're cranky, we're tired, and we can't wait until Friday at 2:15 so we don't have to deal with the people around us. Those are the times where we grow stronger as students and as people. After those periods (around finals and 3rd quarter), we all come out a better group of people. When everyone is not running on mere hours of sleep, coffee, and the comfort of sweatpants and t-shirts, we are all usually chatting and helping each other with homework and concepts that make no sense. The teachers here are some of the best teachers I've had. If we are ever having a problem, whether it be a concept or something we want to share with our teachers, they are there to support us. My fellow students are also supportive. Never do I walk in and not see a happy person here. The joy that comes from this program is because of everyone working together, not against each other. I accredit this togetherness to the fact that we all are not competing against one another for class rank. Working together, whether it be Spirit Week events or homework or doing community service, I know I'm with people who are wonderful, inside and out. This program isn't just a program to me. It's like a family. No, it's not like a family. We ARE a family. I consider Scholars Academy my "school" because that's where I am getting my education. However, I also consider my base high school, Carolina Forest High School, to be my "school" too because I'm being educated there as well. I may not be receiving an academic education there or learning some of the life lessons I am learning at Scholars, but I am receiving an education about my sport, drama, and the balancing act of being an advanced student and participating in other activities. At SA, I learn about parabolas and Wuthering Heights and gerrymandering and chemicals. At CFHS, I learn about stopping goals and learning my lines quickly. Scholars and Carolina Forest are both my schools. We all know about the complaints from the base school kids and their parents about how we as Scholars kids are at an advantage because of the program. EVERY student in their 8th grade year in Horry County Schools has the option of applying to Scholars. We worked hard to get into Scholars, and we worked even harder to stay. Why should we be made our own school because other students feel threatened by us? We all had the chance to come here. If you didn't take the chance, then you won't reap the benefits. The individuals from the base schools also claim it is impossible or near impossible to be valedictorian, salutatorian, etc because we have an advantage. Yes, we have an advantage because we take advanced classes. However, it is not impossible or near impossible for base school kids to be valedictorian, salutatorian, etc. There are base school kids who have beaten out Scholars kids for valedictorian before. The ones who beat the Scholars kids were the ones who worked hard and didn't complain about the advantages other people had. Those kids worked for their place. As have Scholars Academy alumni who were valedictorian, salutatorian, etc and we as Scholars Academy members. Being in this program is perfect as a student-athlete-actress because I get the intensity of the classes here and the ability to play lacrosse and act at my base school. Being able to do activities at my base school has allowed me to stay connected to my base school and the people in it. With Scholars being it's own school, I would not be able to play sports for my base school due to rules concerning playoffs. I would have to choose between the sport I've grown up with and the school I'm beginning to become grown up in. Why should we be forced to make a decision like this? We shouldn't. I don't want to have to make a decision like that, neither should the majority of the Academy who also participate in activities at our base schools. Please make the decision to keep Scholars Academy as a program and not a stand alone high school. I love both SA and CFHS too much to let go of one. Ohana means family and family means nobody gets left behind. We at Scholars are a family, so please do not leave any of our opinions behind as you make your decision. Thank you.</p>	7/25/2014 2:29 AM
16	<p>The draw to the Scholar's Academy for me was respect, freedom, opportunity, and an intellectually centered environment. The more control the district has had over the institution, the more these things have faded. With more students, the close knit family feeling and extraordinarily high level of intellectualism has faded, and because teachers can no longer have close relationships with students, the mutual respect has faded. The policies the district enacts are for the "typical" high school student, one that takes advantage of personal liberties and doesn't follow proper behavioral codes. When I first came to Scholar's, it struck me how much the students respected the rules and the authority of the teachers and how much the teachers trusted and relied upon the students. With a continual broadening, this incredibly unique situation has become nearly impossible. Not only are there now students "cheating" the system, the trust that once made the school feel welcoming and safe has been replaced with an ever shrinking opportunity for difference and greatness. It truly saddens me to see what's happening, and becoming a stand alone high school would be the nail in the coffin to end the vision of what the school should be and stand for once and for all.</p>	7/25/2014 12:28 AM
17	<p>Scholars should not become a stand alone school for a great number of reasons 1. The vast majority of the student body does not want the scholars academy to become a stand alone high school, and it would be wrong to disregard that in favor of appealing to entitled, whiny base schoolers and their parents. 2. Because scholars students are competing amongst themselves, with the exception of those who are apart of the same base school, it allows for a unique culture to develop in which students celebrate the accomplishments of one another without envy or bitterness. This would be ruined if scholars was it's own school. 3. Scholars academy students, if compared to their classmates as opposed to the kids in their high school, the vast majority would lose their class rank, as a result of their substantially increased competition, as a DIRECT result of this students would lose significant scholarships sponsored by both the state and universities. This may not seem like such a big deal until you consider the fact that the lowest 25% of the graduating class would probably average a 3.75 GPA, this would be a gross injustice to deny us our hard earned rank and scholarships. 4. The claim that scholars academy students are competing against kids that "don't have the same opportunities as them" is blatantly false. Any and I repeat any student at Socastee that finds him or herself in competition with me for the title of Valedictorian or Salutatorian could have gone to scholars and taken the classes that I have taken. Do not tell me that opportunity was not given to others, because that is a blatant lie. On the other side of that same coin, if I went to socastee, I'd still be in competition with those same kids, and I'd still have a remarkable class rank, do not blame me nor my program for whatever titles or rewards other students have not been awarded. 5. Making scholars its own school would further alienate scholars academy students from their peers at their base school, leaving them with a relatively small pool of friends. 6. Scholars enrollment would drop, not only as a result of the things mentioned above, but also because one of the main promises made at any scholars academy open house is that students will not be denied their own "high school experience." Without proms (to which the yearly winter formal is NOT and commensurate substitute) or sports teams or pep rallies for students to attend, the high school experience that scholars faculty have worked so hard to make a viable opportunity will be crushed. 7. We all know the real reason base school parent are having temper tantrums over scholars, is because they want their children competing against less academically inclined students to raise their class rank and make them look better for colleges. Don't try to tell me this isn't the case, because we all see right through it, and it's disgusting, underhanded, and unacceptable. Scholars academy students would be every bit as successful if they went to their base schools, and would still be competition for the students they're working so hard to grant an undeserved advantage to. 8. Base schools would suffer as well if scholars were to become its own school. They need our SAT, ACT, and PLAN scores as well as our AP scores to factor into their statistics and yearly records to make themselves look better to the district. Base schools have always profited off the hardwork of scholars academy students, and I find it deplorable that these same people have the audacity to say that WE'RE leeching off the system. 9. Despite what you may have heard, scholars academy students work harder than any group of teenagers I've ever met. We get better grades, taking harder classes, than almost anyone in a base school, and to say that we don't deserve the GPAs we EARN from taking advanced, challenging classes is despicable. I don't have the time, nor the desire to proof read this. I'm very incensed that this is even an issue worth discussing, but I think I've made my point very clear.</p>	7/24/2014 11:52 PM

Student Survey #2

18	<p>Scholars becoming a stand-alone high school would have no benefits for the program or its students. First, we would become even more separate from our base schools. It would make it even less likely that base schools would involve us in their activities or inform us of events. It would make it more difficult for SA students to receive scholarships or get admitted into top-tier schools, despite the fact they are obviously qualified academically. It would eliminate the cooperative atmosphere at SA because students would be competing with each other for valued class rank. This spirit of cooperation is something that makes every single SA student better. I consider my peers at SA to not only be my closest friends, but my greatest tutors. While some base school parents and teachers like to think that SA students "steal" valedictorian, salutatorian, or other high class rankings, this is blatantly false. We earn our class rank just like every other students. In fact, I would assert we work harder for these positions. Grades at SA are deflated. AP exams are a nationally standardized test and are an easy way to compare class performance. At many base schools, students who get a 3 on an AP exam make an A in the course. At SA, students who make 3's on AP exams usually receive low B's or C's in the course. While, in part, this may be a testament to our excellent teachers, there cannot be a doubt that students at SA are expected to work harder if they wish to receive good grades. If SA students can still take these courses and maintain a high class rank or earn a Val/Sal position, they should be commended for it, not punished. We accept this as an inherent characteristic of a program for the academically-gifted, but that should not devalue the work we do or the grades we earn. Also, questioning our right to give speeches if we earn a Val/Sal position is unjust. First of all, it is unlikely that the parents, teachers, and administrators at base school who initiated this discussion will be placated by a simple renunciation of speaking privileges. They want "their" students to be Val/Sal, ignoring the fact that SA students have worked just as hard or harder for their grades. Second, the argument that SA students are not really a part of their base school is completely unfair to our students. While there are transportation and communication issues that may hinder our ability to participate, SA students are heavily involved in their base schools. We play sports, join honor societies, participate in academic teams, ride the buses, go to pep rallies, attend sporting events, and spend time with our peers and friends who just happen to attend the base school. If we are able to earn the title of Valedictorian or Salutatorian, we have the right to make a speech at graduation. Being an SA student should not bar you from participating in your graduation. Currently, it is very likely that I will be CFHS's valedictorian. I will speak at my graduation. I earned the right to speak to my close friends and peers at one of the most momentous ceremonies of our high school years. The fact I attended SA did not prevent me from making friends at CFHS and sharing many of the same experiences and I have a right to speak about them at my graduation. This idea of SA students being "others" or "different" is something that only the administration perceives and should not be reinforced. We are just like any other students and our peers at the base schools treat us as such. The fact that the school board has not come to this realization is rather unfortunate.</p>	7/24/2014 10:44 PM
19	<p>When I think of the Scholars Academy becoming a stand-alone high school, it makes me worry about my fellow classmates at my base high school. I participate in athletics, and I do not know what the Scholars Academy would offer if it became its own high school. Also, I wonder what extra curricular activities the Scholars Academy would offer. I had made a plan to go to my base high school after Scholars gets over during the day to practice with the Acapella Choir at Conway High School.</p>	7/24/2014 9:46 PM
20	<p>I enjoy playing sports at my base school but.</p>	7/24/2014 9:26 PM
21	<p>Please see my comments above.</p>	7/24/2014 9:05 PM
22	<p>I do not feel as if the Scholars Academy should become a stand-alone high school because I came into this program with the knowledge that I could still participate in base school activities and more importantly athletics, as a student who may potentially play a sport for my college. If it were made its own school, I would feel even more like an outsider to the base school kids, and feel as if I would miss out on events such as football games and pep rallies because I wouldn't even really be associated with the base school anymore. The people at the Scholars Academy are great students who care about their standings in school as it is. If Scholars became its own school, rankings and placement would become the constant center of attention, instead of the actual learning and discovering themselves.</p>	7/24/2014 8:20 PM
23	<p>I went into this program under the assumption that I would have the ability to stay connected to my base school. I know a number of students who were my equal academically and made the decision to stay at the base school because they weighed other extracurricular activities as a higher priority than academics. I accepted the academic rigor that comes with this program, and do not feel that it would be proper to punish me or my fellow "scholars" for accepting the challenge by placing us at a social and academic disadvantage.</p>	7/24/2014 8:06 PM
24	<p>I would honestly most likely go back to my base school if it did. I am at Scholars to get a good education and be at the top of my class rank. Without that, I would rather take the credits I have already earned and return to my base school, where I participate in athletics and honor society.</p>	7/24/2014 8:03 PM
25	<p>If the scholars academy does become a stand alone high school, I will make an ultimate decision to terminate my attendance at the school.</p>	7/24/2014 7:50 PM
26	<p>I want to go to college! If I don't get adequate scholarships because I was near the bottom of Scholars Academy class ranking, yet would be at the top of my base school's class ranking, I would extremely saddened and upset. It would also be extremely unfair, and unless there is a way to fix this problem, Scholars Academy should not become a independent high school!</p>	7/24/2014 7:25 PM
27	<p>It would ruin the whole Scholars Experience and teach the people at the base schools it is okay to exclude those you're afraid or intimidated by.</p>	7/24/2014 7:18 PM
28	<p>NO NOT AT ALL. If we became a "school" then we could not participate in our high school activities, such as football, marching band, etc. And we would have to make our own teams which could not rand against other high schools in the county, because of our small size.</p>	7/24/2014 7:16 PM
29	<p>The SA should not become a stand alone high school. We would lose out on sports, prom, and other base school opportunities. All in all, the student body would lose more than is gained. I would leave SA if it became a stand alone school.</p>	7/24/2014 6:00 PM
30	<p>Absolutely not. A key reason we are currently attending the school is because it offers us a better chance to acquire high class rank. If Scholars becomes stand-alone, we lose that ability. Please, please, PLEASE keep Scholars as a program, not a stand-alone high school.</p>	7/24/2014 5:44 PM
31	<p>I do not understand how it would benefit anyone. I feel that it would hurt the scholars students and it would hurt the base school's statistics. What about transportation and athletics? I don't understand why this is even a topic of discussion.</p>	7/24/2014 4:48 PM
32	<p>I strongly hope it doesn't</p>	7/24/2014 4:47 PM

Student Survey #2

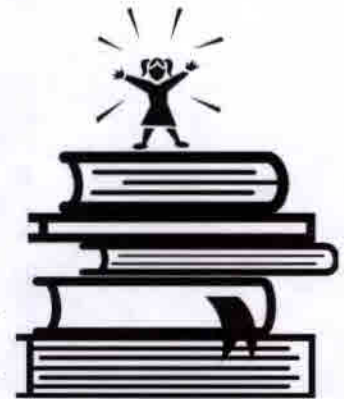
33	Only select individuals have been able to take the Scholars plunge that I embarked on three years ago. Those who don't attend Scholars as a student or who have never had the opportunity to engage with these students on a daily basis as our teachers, parents, and administrators have don't understand that Scholars is more than a school for our district's most advanced learners. Scholars Academy is built on the foundation of creative and academic expression and exploration of its students enabled by it's dedicated faculty and staff and challenging nature. Moreover, Scholars is a unique environment that enables each individual to flourish. No matter whether we are a program or a school, Scholars will retain these characteristics because it is who we are. Our Scholars spirit runs deeper than what any sign on Chanticleer Drive or any diploma we are handed in May dictates. In saying this, the purpose of and the aura that surrounds Scholars Academy will remain constant. As a school, we will be able to further develop our culture and broaden our opportunities to allow more students to flourish. If students and parents were truly taking a stake with the best interest of the program and it's students in mind, they wouldn't stand in the way of a decision that would allow the culture to develop at the school. While it might be because I am not in a "fighting position" for valedictorian and salutatorian at my base school, I personally don't understand the students who want to to keep Scholars a program solely because of the benefit of being first or second at a school that you don't attend on a daily basis. At the end of the day, I would feel more satisfied having graduated 47 out of 47 with honors at a top school in the nation that challenged me and fostered my growth academically and socially than to say that I was first among 300 students that I haven't seen in four years. Because of these reasons, I fully support the transition of Scholars Academy from a program to a school.	7/24/2014 3:38 PM
34	Strongly against it becoming stand alone.	7/24/2014 3:20 PM
35	It is fine as is. Scholars Academy becoming its own high school would turn the academic scene there into a cold, competitive war zone. Students would not be able to make it into good colleges with low class ranks, despite still being high-achievers.	7/24/2014 3:10 PM
36	I selected this because I am not sure. Becoming our own school would make us a top ranking high school and it would allow the students to graduate together, rather than at the base high school. I have more friends at the Scholars Academy, and I would rather graduate from Scholars. But, becoming our own entity would give us class ranking; and being the last in the class doesn't look good on a college application. But being from a top ranking high school might do more good than the bad done by being last in the class; i.e. if the worst in the class graduates magna cum laude, they may look deeper into your portfolio. I understand that they don't want us to be our own school because our scores bring the scores at the base high school up; but how much can ten students from a thousand person high school really bring up scores? I am not sure of all the pros and cons, but I think that they balance out. And if they do balance out completely, I would prefer becoming our own high school.	7/24/2014 3:08 PM
37	Becoming a stand-alone high school is a terrible idea. I'd rather leave the program before it becomes a stand-alone high school.	7/24/2014 2:55 PM
38	The majority of scholars students currently participates in sports and this would limit the variety of personalities and people at scholars.	7/24/2014 2:35 PM
39	Ruins the ability of many to participate in most athletic events.	7/24/2014 2:15 PM
40	Making this program a stand-alone school would kill it. There are people at my old base school that got accepted but didn't want to come because they didn't want to be disconnected from their base school friends. A few of us took the risk and decided to come to the program anyway and realized we still have the connection with the base schools. Make this program a stand-alone school and you will lose those few that took the risk. (By few, I mean all.) We love being connected to our base schools.	7/24/2014 2:11 PM
41	The only way that it could possibly be done is if we didn't have class ranks.	7/24/2014 2:09 PM
42	Same as above	7/24/2014 2:03 PM
43	I enjoy being a part of both my base school and Scholars and I do not want to give up class rankings and other activities that I would have at my base school. Everyone had the same opportunity to apply and I do not want to be punished for my choice simply because others did not choose as I did.	7/24/2014 2:03 PM
44	Never.	7/24/2014 1:57 PM

Scholars Academy Discussion

Wednesday, August 27, 2014
District Office – 335 Four Mile Road
Room A-133
4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.


Agenda

- Welcome
- SA Committee Work Update
- Report Card Comparisons
- Student Survey
- Discussion
- Narrowing Our Focus
- Questions/Concerns



Notes:

Notes:



A series of horizontal lines for writing notes.

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Scholars Academy Options

Option	Vote
Scholars Academy continues to operate as a program.	
Scholars Academy becomes a stand-alone high school. (Class of 2019)	
Scholars Academy becomes a stand-alone high school. HCS will seek legislative action to not rank 11 th and 12 th graders. Scholarships will be based on 10 th grade rank. (Governor's School model)	
Scholars Academy Program continues as a program. SA students will not speak at base school graduation. (USC Upstate)	
Other Option #1	
Other Option #2	
Other Option #3	

Scholars Academy continues to operate as a program.

Pros

- Base high school student achievement data will remain unaffected.
- SA program will continue to show increased enrollment.
- Enrolled students will continue to have additional scholarship and recognition opportunities.
- HCS will maintain its current program options for students.

Cons

- Secondary schools will continue to have communication issues.
- Non-Scholars Academy parents/students will continue to question valedictorian and salutatorian designations.
- Continued guidance issues between base high school and Scholars Academy program.
- Base high school students may lose additional scholarship and recognition opportunities.

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Scholars Academy becomes a stand-alone high school. (Class of 2019)

Pros

- Will reduce future class rank, Val/Sal issues, graduation speakers, etc. for base school students.
- Will create cleaner student achievement data.
- Will allow SA to receive a state report card that accurately reflects the school's progress.
- Will allow SA to receive more state and national recognition.
- May reduce guidance workload at the base schools.
- Will reduce communication issues between secondary schools & the program.
- Will reduce the number of concerns from non-SA parents/students.
- SA students may continue to participate in sports and other extracurricular activities that are only offered at the base school.

Cons

- Will impact student achievement data at the base high schools.
- May cause a reduction in applicants.
- May reduce the number of Palmetto Fellows Scholarship recipients for SA and the district.
- May affect the base high school report card scores.
- May affect the "collaborative" atmosphere at SA.
- Will increase the number of concerns from SA parents/students.
- May reduce the number of National Merit Semi-finalist at the base schools.
- SA program will have its own designated valedictorian and salutatorian at its graduation and its own rank among its students.
- May affect the "family" climate at SA program.

Notes

- Students may enroll at SA, but opt to return to the base high school during the senior year.
- Even if students continue to attend SA, it doesn't resolve the graduation speakers issue. (Consider: Homeschool, Private school, STEM, ATA, AAST, and PACE programs)

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Scholars Academy become a stand-alone school. HCS will seek legislative action to not rank 11th and 12th graders. Scholarships will be based on 10th grade rank. (Governor's School model)

Pros

- Will reduce future Val/Sal issues.
- Will reduce the number of concerns from non-SA parents/students.
- Guidance issues will be resolved for 11th and 12th graders.

Cons

- May reduce the number of Palmetto Fellows scholarship recipients.
- May cause a reduction in SA applicants.
- May cause students to return to their base high school after the 11th and 12th grade year.
- Will increase the number of concerns from SA parents/students.

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**Scholars Academy Program continues as a program. SA students will not speak at base school graduation.
(USC Upstate model)**

Pros

- Will allow base schools to retain the SA student achievement data.
- Will reduce the number of concerns from non-SA parents/students.
- HCS will maintain its current options for students.
- Base high schools may have graduation speakers who are on their school campuses.

Cons

- Secondary schools & programs will continue to have communication issues.
- SA program will have its own designated speakers at its graduation, but students will continue to be ranked at the base high school.
- Will not alleviate scholarship issues.