



April 11, 2017

To: Mr. Thomas Mahoney
From: Kip Crandall
Re: Promotion Ceremony proposal

Proposal: This proposal recommends doing away with David L. Rahn's formal promotion ceremony that is currently held each spring. This would not take effect until the 2018-2019 school year.

Rationale: As stated in some of the references below, this tradition has outlived its original intent of graduating from the eighth being a milestone in many student's educational careers. We did conduct an informal survey two years ago that was pretty much split 50/50 between the viewpoints of keep and no need to continue.

Testimonies: "The biggest factor in this decision would be regarding the class. If the students will be scattered due to having to attend a different school, I would say your hands are tied. However, as at my school, if they are advancing as a class I do not see the reason for hosting the event. We got rid of this tradition two years ago. We still hold an 8th grade awards day but it is very low key. An 8th grade education doesn't provide much, these days so save the celebration for a momentous event such as graduating from high school!" Duane Ehmen – Iroquois West Middle School

"Smithfield Middle School 8th Grade awards Ceremony." "This event is intended to celebrate your student's time here at SMS and is not a graduation ceremony. We want to keep the term "graduation" as the main event for high school and college." Kyle Pekurney – Smithfield Middle School

"We wanted to focus more on our student's achievements." "The passing from eighth grade to high school is something we expect." "We wanted to do more of a student-oriented program." Mary Hettinger – Unity Junior High

"We want to honor them, but it's eighth grade, there's a lot more ahead." Jeff Starwalt – Mahomet-Seymour Junior High

Mission: Educate students to be lifelong learners who are productive, responsible citizens.

David L. Rahn Junior High School

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Notification: Should the decision to do away with promotion be made, notification to our current sixth grade class would be made prior to the start of next school year. As noted below, this was found to be important when researching this decision.

"We told students coming in for seventh-grade orientation that we want to do something different for their graduation." "We want them to know when they enter junior high so we're not pulling the rug out from under them...three months or even a year beforehand." John Weaver – Blue Ridge Junior High

Alternative: Other schools have addressed replacing their promotion ceremony by creating a daytime celebration; others have an evening award program. Again, if the decision is made to do away with promotion, a committee of parents will be formed to discuss further what the alternative plan will be to honor our eighth grade students here at DLR. My initial inclination is to create an evening award program. I believe this to be important in an effort to honor some of the more personal awards such as the "Miss Mal" and Terry O'Connor awards that are tied directly to a family having lost a child. Another initial thought would be to marry this award program to the parent sponsored eighth grade party and hold them both on the same evening.

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