

Proposed Academic Recognition Changes

Principal: Sean Galiher

Director Counseling Center: John Westra

Our Journey

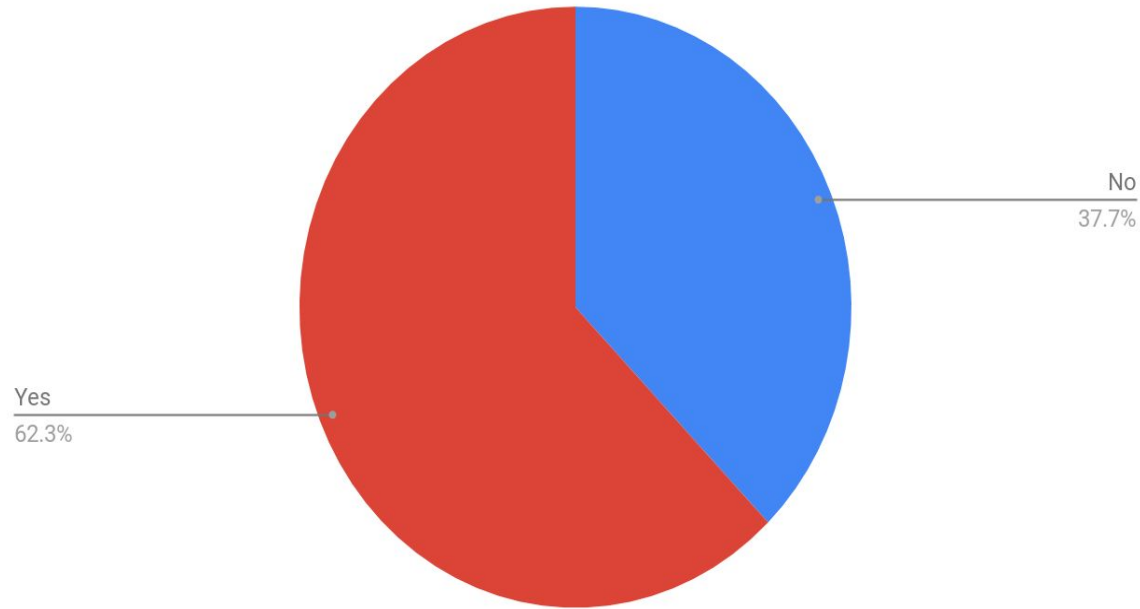
- 17.18 School Year
- Student Voice
- Is there a better way?
- Social and Emotional Learning/Wellness
- Research
 - Alternative Approaches
 - University Feedback
- Parent, Student and Teacher Surveys
- Latin Honors proposal

Student Statements

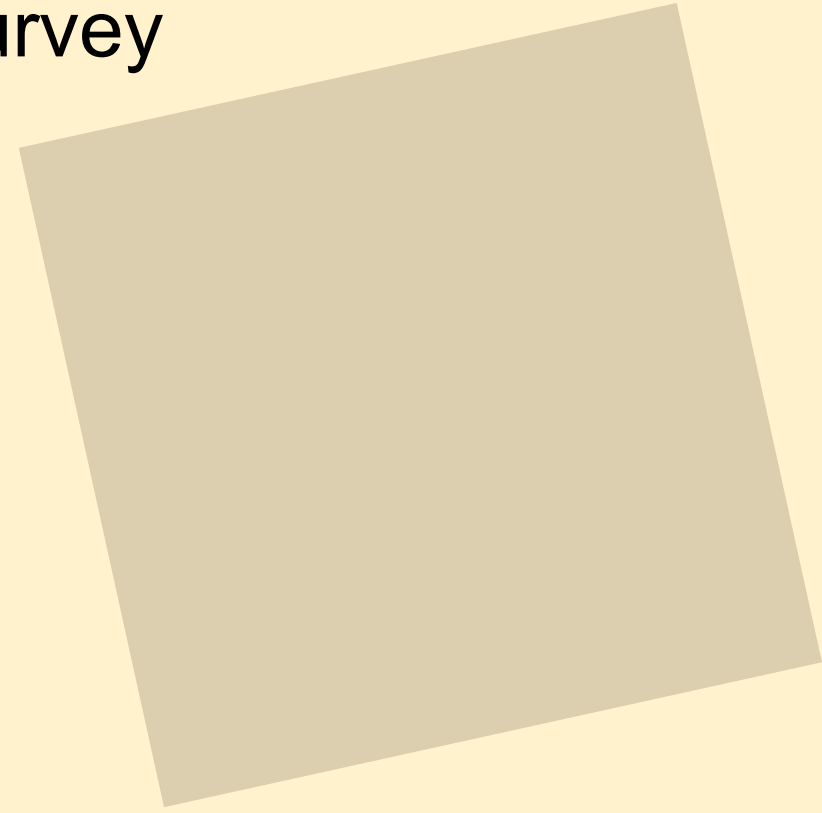
- **Past valedictorian**
 - “The Val system created the expectation that learning no longer mattered and that the only important thing was surviving and outlasting those around you.”
- **Current front runners**

Student Feedback

Have you ever experienced undue pressure (stress/anxiety) over your class rank in comparison to your peers?



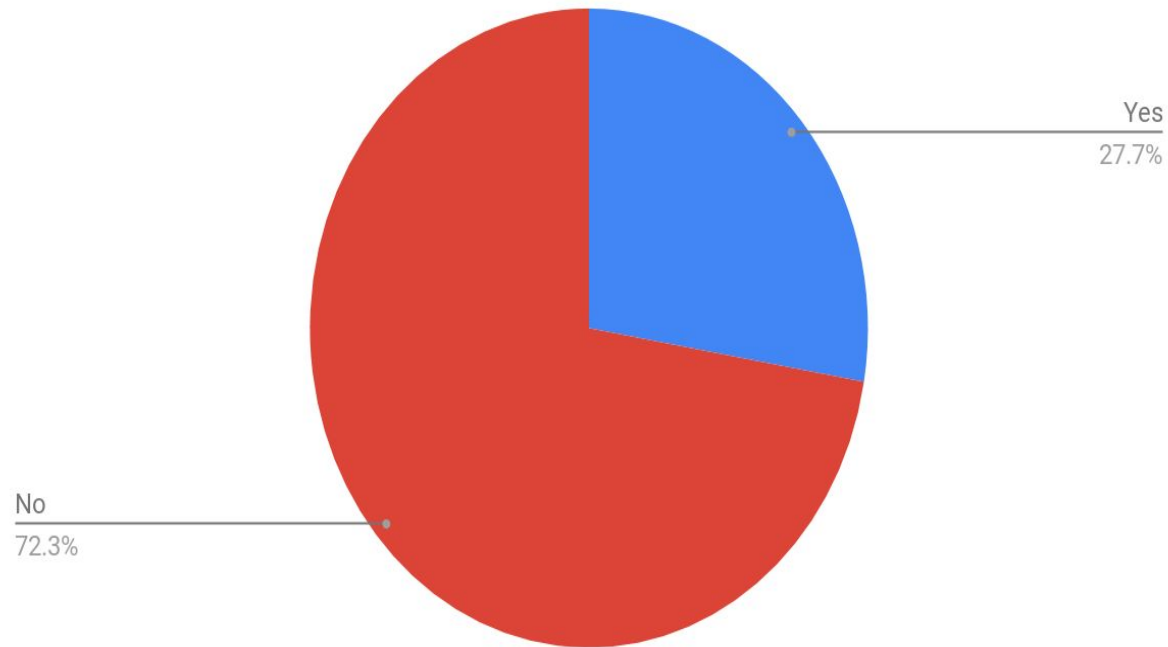
- Learning environment
- Course selections
- Unhealthy competition
- Student Survey
 - 62%



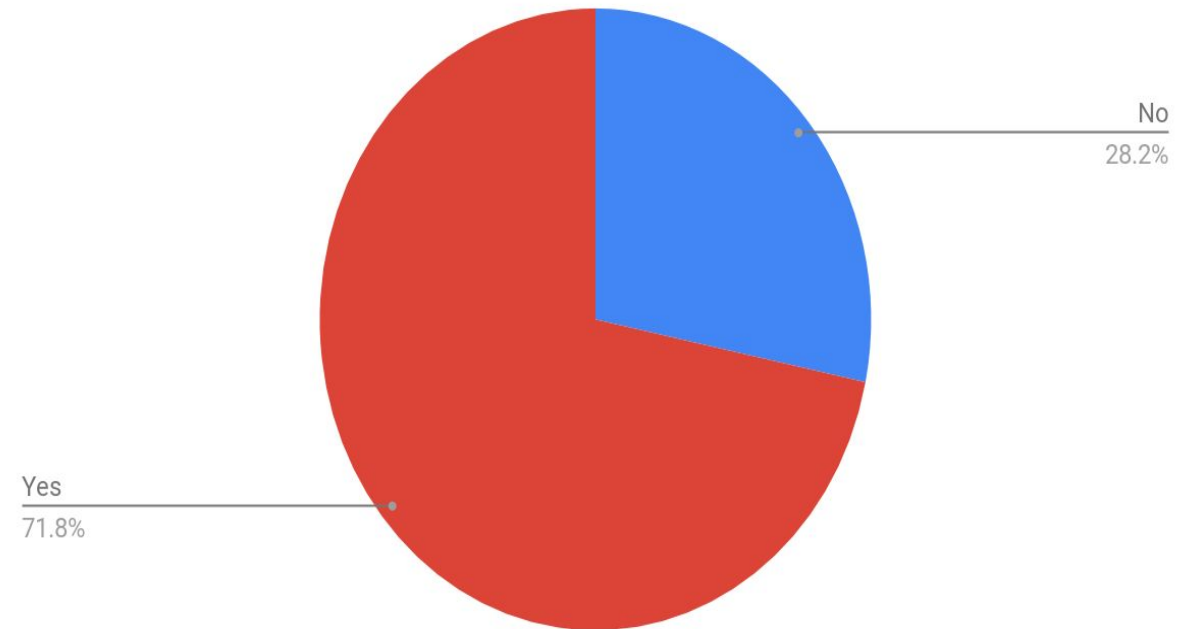
Student Feedback

Survey results:

Do you feel that your class rank is a true indication of your academic performance and abilities?



Do you think Penn High School should transition to a different system for recognizing academic achievement and incorporate a Latin honors designation beginning with the class of 2023?



Parent Feedback

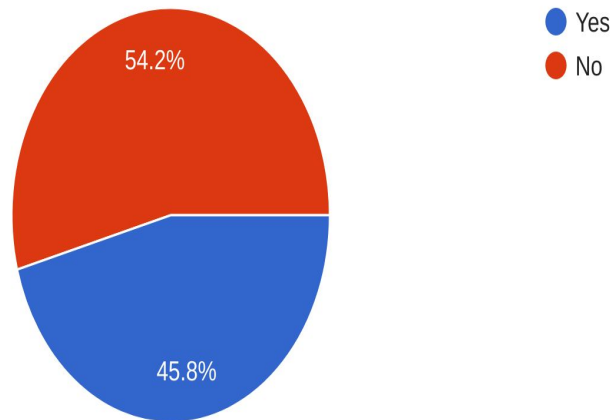
“I think it would be an excellent idea for Penn to transition to a different system for recognizing academic achievement and incorporate a Latin designation. As a college administrator, I can say the rationale provided in the email was exactly correct.”

Parent Feedback

Survey Results

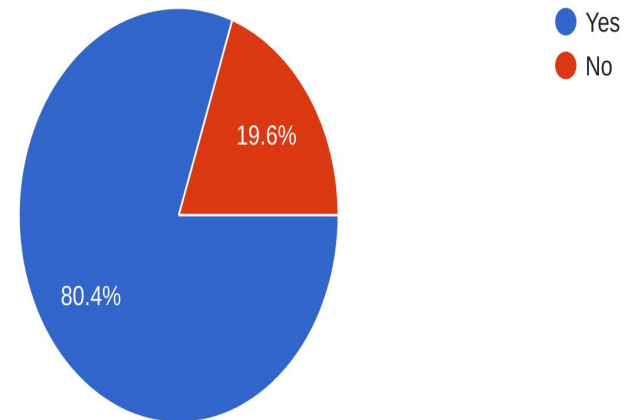
Has your student ever experienced undue pressure (stress/anxiety) over his or her class rank in comparison to their peers?

225 responses



Do you think Penn High School should transition to a different system for recognizing academic achievement and ...n beginning with the class of 2023 ?

225 responses



Parent Feedback

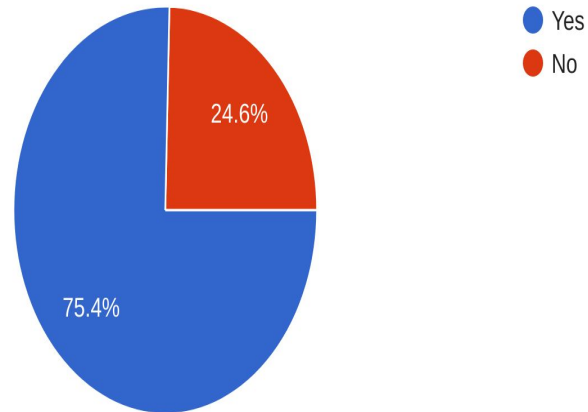
“Although my son has not yet altered his course selection for reasons of class rank attainment, he has raised the question about whether he should. That he would even consider this question and contemplate not taking courses in which he has genuine interest simply to pursue a class ranking is indicative that the current class rank system is distorting the thinking and choices of students in a negative way. I applaud your raising the question of adopting an alternative academic recognition system, and wholeheartedly support the proposal to move toward a Latin honors system.”

Teacher Feedback

Survey Results

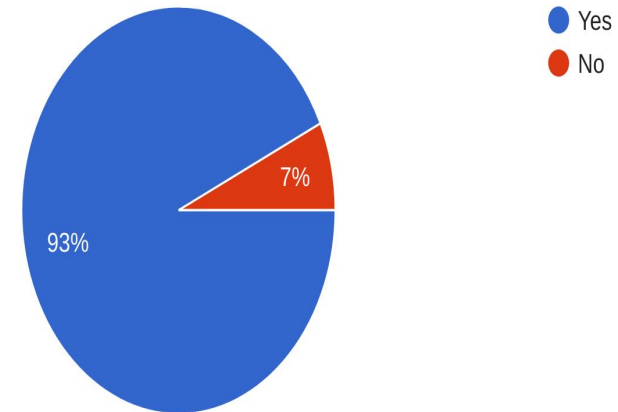
Are you aware of students who experience undue pressure (stress/anxiety) over his or her class rank in comparison to their peers?

57 responses



Do you think Penn High School should transition to a different system for recognizing academic achievement and ...n beginning with the class of 2023 ?

57 responses



University Feedback

- Applicants are holistically reviewed within the context of the school's processes and systems. Essays and other distinguishing factors impact admission, not Valedictorian/Salutatorian status or class rank.
- Valedictorian/Salutatorian status *may* be a consideration for some merit based scholarships, but not as a distinguishing factor for admission.

University Feedback

“Princeton does not have a preference for a specific grading scale or way of evaluating students. We read applications from all over the world, so we utilize the school reports to understand how students challenged themselves within their academic environments.”

University Feedback

“Northwestern’s policy is to consider every application in the context of the high school that the applicant attends. That means that we do not have a preference for one particular type of grading scale or ranking system – we review applications from every different type of high school, and we rely on the grading and ranking scale of each unique place when we analyze the work that students have done in that environment. Many high schools don’t rank, and even among those that do, every school approaches the process differently. It will not matter in the admission review process if a student attends a high school that does not rank.”

Other Schools

Schools with similar demographics and school structures are making this change (along with countless schools across the country). Some in Indiana include:

- Carmel High School
- Westfield High School
- Noblesville High School
- Crown Point High School

Changes

Current Model of Recognition

Valedictorian/Salutatorian (top 2% of senior class determined by class rank)

Class Rank (visible on transcript)

Proposed Model of Recognition (Class of 2023)

Latin Honors System

- Cum Laude
- Magna Cum Laude
- Summa Cum Laude

Class Rank (not visible on transcript, available for colleges)

- Decile system

Proposed Changes

Latin Designation	GPA minimum	*Honors Diploma	Definition
<i>cum laude</i>	3.7500	Academic or Technical	<i>With praise</i>
<i>magna cum laude</i>	4.0000	Academic or Technical	<i>With high praise</i>
<i>summa cum laude</i>	4.2500	Academic or Technical	<i>With highest praise</i>

Commencement speaker(s) will be determined based on an application and selection process for students recognized as Summa Cum Laude

*Any student receiving an Academic/Technical Honors Diploma (3.0 GPA or better and meets criteria) is recognized at graduation.
*Students must have already completed 7 semesters and/or be on track to receive an Academic/Technical Honors Diploma at the time of graduation to be recognized as *summa cum laude*, *magna cum laude* or *cum laude*.

Changes - Why?

The Advantages of Latin Honors

1. Latin honors recognize the academic accomplishments of more students and is fundamentally more equitable
2. Colleges, universities, and the general public are familiar with Latin honors

The Disadvantages to Class Rank

1. Class ranking only recognizes a comparatively small number of students
2. Students may decline to take educationally valuable courses or pursue personal interests
3. Students may narrowly fixate on numerical indicators of academic performance and miniscule scoring discrepancies

Timeline

Recognition	Who	Based On	Implement with the class of...				
			2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Incorporate Laude system into Commencement Program	All laude	Individual GPA					X
Graduation recognition	All laude	Individual GPA					X
Graduation speaker(s)	summa cum laude	Application and Selection					X
Remove Valedictorian & Salutatorian distinction	All Students	Individual GPA					X
Transcript	All laude	Individual GPA					X
Remove ranking on report card	All Students	Individual GPA				X	X
Add decile to transcript and report card	All Students	Individual GPA				X	X



Thank You!