

Student of the Month selection needs reforms

Oracle Staff

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According to Assistant Principal William Blair, district administration has been reviewing the MVLA Student of the Month selection process “all semester” with the goal of defining both the award and the selection process by the next school year. In the 2018-2019 school year, the Student of the Month selection process should include staff nominations and broader criteria.

Currently, Blair is effectively the sole party responsible for selecting the Student of the Month; he presents nominees to school administration and recommends the final selection to the school board. Blair said that he selects potential honorees by look-

ing at a list of the students with the top 25 weighted GPAs and selects students he feels are well rounded, which he said was a procedure he was shown when he first began working at MVHS.

GPA is not the only indicator of academic success

However, one person alone cannot gather a complete impression of every student who might receive the honor, only those with whom they interact. Therefore, staff should be prompted monthly to offer potential

nominees that have positively impacted the classroom. Staff can offer more than the gradebook can. This way, the pool from which nominees are chosen will be more well-rounded in terms of student achievement.

In addition, restricting eligibility to a select few academic high-achievers is problematic on a number of levels.

This year, according to Principal David Grissom, 64 graduating seniors have a cumulative GPA of four-point-five or higher. It’s clear that students with the top 25 weighted GPAs do not encompass all academic high-achievers.

Limiting recognition to these students acknowledges only a very narrow definition of success, one that historically favors white and Asian

students — who together constitute all but one of recognized students in the last four years — and students who attended either Blach Intermediate School or a private middle school.

GPA is not the only indicator of academic success: the student that hosts forums to encourage student voice, the student who takes un-weighted classes that appeal to their passions, and the student who balances a part-time job with academic rigor all contribute in important ways to our community.

If our school truly wants to promote wellness — and encourages students to challenge themselves within their limits and their interests — the way they recognize student achievement should reflect that.