

Town Hall #4

9/24/19

Visiting Students:

Odelyah Abrahams

Sivan Gvili

Isabelle Platt

Tehilla Benporat

Natalie Harkham

Dalya Teller

Teri Ben-Shushan

Noya Kanian

Shira Wolf

Talya Davoudian

Adi Liebenthal

Kyla Zachary

Tali Liebenthal

Danielle Goldschein

Chana Light

Layla Hellman

Malia Nagel

Nellie Javaherian

Olivia Orbuch

FROM:

Maimonides

Meme of the Week:

Shalhevet: Posts mandatory untitled meeting happening in 5 minutes.

Students:



Mensch of the Week is...

CAROLINE EDRY!!!!

“After mishmar, she cleaned up my whole house so I wouldn’t have to worry about it :)”



Outfit of the Week!



VALEDICTORIANS

Valedictorians?

- What is the purpose of a valedictorian?
- Who should this be?

How it currently works:

- At Shalhevet, the student with *highest* GPA (grade point average) is selected as a graduating class' valedictorian. They also give a speech at graduation.
- It is typically considered as the highest honor to give to a high school student at graduation.
- It should be noted: College's pay little attention to valedictorian, as most admissions decisions are done by then.

Discuss: The Value of Highest GPA

- What are the upsides of having this approach?
- What are the downsides?
- Does determining the valedictorian of a graduating class based only on GPA reflect the values of Shalhevet?

Harvard Westlake

Harvard Westlake: “We run GPAs and pull the names of the top four or five (sometimes it’s just three—based on a clear decimal point cutoff).

1. We keep those finalists “ranked” for a discussion among the Deans ONLY at this point. We talk about certain points.
2. Once the Deans decide on that final group, we present them to the entire faculty at the annual Awards Selection meeting
3. Again, each student’s Dean speaks on their accomplishments and strengths.
4. Any faculty member (a teacher, coach or other) can speak up to offer insights into each student and can “lobby” for a student based on other circumstances
5. And then we do a full faculty vote to determine the valedictorian.

The salutatorian is voted on by the class and has been based on who will give the best speech. It is completely unrelated to GPA.”

Other Modern Orthodox Schools:

It should be noted, MOST schools we emailed said they determined their Valedictorian and Salutatorian purely off GPA, such as HAFTR, Kohelet Yeshiva, Maimonides, Jewish Educational Center, Buriah Girls, TABC, YDE, NSHA, DRS, Frisch, Mayanot, and others.

YUHSG: “We start with GPA and then consider extra curricula and faculty nominations for salutatorian and valedictorian awards.”

SAR: “We have two class representatives selected by the students. Students suggest nominees who are subject to admin approval and then students vote for one male and one female rep.”

Ida Crown: “We do not have one. We allow kids to vote on three to four speakers.”

Bnei Akiva Toronto: “Val only, nominated by students in the class, but admin have final say. We give students criteria by which they should make their nominations. It has never happened in my time that students nominated candidate that admin had to veto.”

Other schools:

Sage Hill: “We do not have a valedictorian and do not name the top of the class. Instead, there is a competition and students submit speeches to a committee of staff/faculty.”

Milken: “Department chairs and several members of admin pick the Val, Sal and Hebrew speaker from the top 10% of the class. They choose speakers based on mission alignment.”

Polytechnic: “We put every senior’s name in a hat and pull eight. Seniors can opt out prior to the drawing if they like. The eight we pull are the speakers, and each works with a teacher to craft a speech that highlights some aspect of their Poly experience.”

Bnei Akiva Toronto: “Val only, nominated by students in the class, but admin have final say. We give students criteria by which they should make their nominations. It has never happened in my time that students nominated candidate that admin had to veto.”

The “Valedictorian” Proposal:

“The Valedictorian and Salutatorian at Shalhevet's graduation should represent the totality of Shalhevet's values, and not rely exclusively on GPA. While academic achievement is wonderful and should be celebrated (we do that through subject awards), Shalhevet seeks to promote values, character development, and communal contribution that are not measured by a student's GPA. Additionally, often the GPA difference between those in the top 10% is so minimal that that we end up saying that one student is more deserving than another based on a very, very tiny percentage - 4.85 v. 4.83, for example. Therefore, we'd like to suggest an alternative method to select these honorees:”

The “Valedictorian” Proposal:

- 1) The top 8 GPAs in a grade are separated from the class and put into a pool of potential graduating speakers.
- 2) Faculty and admin will then vote on one individual who will be that year's valedictorian.
- 3) Once that student is removed, faculty and admin will then select 1 or 2 students to be that year's salutatorian(s).
 - Through this system there is an objective system (GPA) that helps us reach a pool of 8 students and a subjective one that allows faculty/admin to choose the students that best embody Shalhevet's values.

Discuss: The Proposed System

- What are the upsides to this new system?
- What are the downsides?

Discuss: Objective vs Subjective?

- What are pros and cons of an objective system?
- What are pros and cons of a subjective system?
 - Why would an objective be better than subjective?
 - A subjective be better than an objective?

Discuss: Final Comments

- Should this proposal pass?
 - Yay, why?
 - Nay, why?

LETS VOTE!

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CHECK

SCHOOLOGY!!!