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Scholarship

### Message to the School Board

Looking back at my high school career, I see many changes the school and I have gone through. There are a lot of new improvement programs we have formed as a district, such as new ICU program, the Dawg Pound program, and the after school athletic tutoring. Dixon High School is also always looking for new ways to introduce volunteer opportunities and ways to serve the community.

I believe a good improvement on the education and overall school experience would be to set up a student-to-student mentoring program. The implementation of this, I believe, should consist of juniors and seniors who meet specific criteria, set up by the school board, mentoring a single upcoming high school student. As an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, I would look up to the upper classmen in high school, and wonder how they got to the point they are at. Having a Junior or Senior mentor in 8<sup>th</sup> grade would help with the ease of settling into high school, making the transition smoother and more exciting. Setting this up will allow the 8<sup>th</sup> grade student to have someone to be able to look up to in an educational and inspiring manner, it would help the incoming freshmen get more involved seeing what all extracurricular activities the mentors are in and what all they participate in, whether it is clubs, sports, or even recommending specific classes the students should take depending of their likings. Seeing how much the upperclassmen completed throughout high school and what goals they have set will encourage the incoming freshman and lead them to several opportunities in the future.

Student-Student mentoring has become a program in many schools and has improved student relationships with the school, and other peers. Statistics from mentoring.org concluded students who had an upper level student mentor are 55% more likely to enroll in college, 78% more likely to volunteer regularly, 90% more interested in becoming a mentor, and 130% more likely to hold leadership positions. Looking at these statistics and not jumping on board makes me question how much more we could accomplish as a school and how many more important roles our students could fulfill. These characteristics that could form from this new program would profoundly influence the well being of our school.

I believe having friends who were upper classmen really got me more involved with the school, by joining multiple clubs, trying new sports, and even joining classes they had taken or were taking at the moment. They even allowed me to take on leadership roles in FCCLA, FBLA, and other clubs. But not everyone has people like that to look up to, and given a mentor could help shape the way they view certain extracurricular activities.

With Dixons ever changing school organizations and programs, I conclude this student-student mentoring program to be a necessary project Dixon should form. New ways to improve the school and education is always something we should be open to.