



MOUNTAIN BROOK
SCHOOLS

September 30, 2011

Dear Parents:

Newsweek recently released its annual ranking of "America's Best High Schools." Mountain Brook High School was one of many high schools across the country omitted from the list because of missing data. The omissions appear to be the result of changes in *Newsweek's* ownership and changes in the team that requested and compiled the list. Despite missing data from many schools nationally, the rankings were published. Based on our data, Mountain Brook High School would have been in or near the top 100 schools in this report.

Rankings based on quantitative data, as the *Newsweek's* report was, can be useful in estimating a school's performance. However, this is an opportunity to note that evaluating the effectiveness of schools only by quantitative data is myopic at best. We put similar emphasis on qualitative aspects of education, which are more difficult to measure and which are never included as criteria in national rankings. One aspect of the total school experience of which we are most proud is the very high rate of student involvement. An overwhelming majority of our students are highly involved in extracurricular activities such as debate, theater, athletics and community service.

Educating the whole child is extremely difficult to quantify and yet we strive to constantly improve an already excellent student experience by promoting an effective, challenging, and engaging education for every one of our students. As proud as we are of how our students compare nationally on the full range of quantitative measures, the qualitative aspects are also an essential part of preparing our students for higher education and for citizenship.

We appreciate your ongoing support of our schools, our staff, and most of all, our students. Community support is yet another aspect of school life that cannot easily be measured but which is in abundance in Mountain Brook.

Sincerely,

Vic Wilson
MBHS Principal

Sincerely,

Richard Barlow
Superintendent

effective · challenging · engaging