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Dear Grade 8 Parents,

The next five months may prove challenging for you and your students, as they make their way toward graduation in June. There are many milestones in their lives during that period which can cause a rollercoaster of emotions for our graduates. Our partnership and mutual trust will serve our students especially well during their transition from grade school to high school.

With Catholic high school notices arriving this week, students are about to make one of the first major decisions of their lives. With that decision comes relief, a sense of purpose, and anticipation. It also comes with uncertainty about the future and the realization that their tight-knit group of classmates is about to be disrupted. This can produce a volatile cocktail of emotions.

Eighth grade students may be excited and fully prepared for high school one minute and fearful and full of anxiety the next. You may hear them state unequivocally that they are "sick of" or "so done with" Villa, then see their eyes tear up when they talk about moving on and missing their friends.

This is actually good news. If students feel confident and ready to move on to the next challenge, we have done our job successfully. If students realize that they will miss their friends, we can be assured that many of them will retain these classmates as lifelong friends.

Over the next several months, we will work with the students to address the ups and downs of the last half of eighth grade explicitly. We will also apprise you if we notice anything out of the ordinary and ask that you help us help them navigate their last semester at Villa successfully by keeping us in the loop as well. Let us know if anything untoward occurs in their home life.

While we cannot ensure a smooth emotional ride from here to June, we can certainly work together to keep the peaks and valleys at manageable levels. Thank you for your help, and we look forward to seeing your students through this interesting and challenging time in their young lives.

Pat Preib
Middle School Director