

July 13, 2018

Dear St. HOPE Scholars and Families,

I hope everyone has been enjoying a relaxing summer! As we quickly approach the start of the 2018-19 school year, I am filled with excitement, enthusiasm, and a deep commitment to ensuring that all St. HOPE Public Schools (SHPS) are performing at the highest level, so that all of our scholars can reach their greatest potential on their path to and through college. To that end, we are currently in the process of making a series of improvements to our staffing and classroom structures and we are working hard to bring new services, resources, and extracurricular opportunities to our campuses.

I am shifting from my role as Principal at PS7 and will now be serving as Chief of Schools for all St. HOPE schools – including PS7, Oak Park Prep and Sacramento Charter High School. In this role I will provide oversight to the school site leadership teams and work to create a framework for enhanced communication and consistency within our education model and approach to teaching common core standards across all of our schools. As I take on my new role, I wanted to share with you a few of my key priorities for the coming years:

- **Ensuring consistency in our educational experience.** At SHPS it is our goal that once our scholars and families join us in their educational journey that they matriculate through our entire system so that we can strategically support them at each grade level on their path to college. We want to ensure that our scholars and families are receiving a consistent experience throughout SHPS even as they matriculate from one school site to another. I will be focusing on ensuring our five pillars are consistently applied, that we are delivering high quality, aligned rigorous instruction in every classroom, that we have consistent communication methods and that we are always holding our scholars to high expectations both inside and outside the classroom. Having consistent scholar expectations, teaching styles and communication methods will ensure our scholars, families and staff have a high quality educational experience.
- **Providing the greatest level of professional development.** At SHPS we are fortunate to have so much professional development time built in to our school calendar. I will be focusing on ensuring that we are maximizing this time so that our teachers and staff are over prepared for their time in front of scholars so that they have enriching, rigorous, differentiated lessons prepared to teach from bell to bell. Professional development time will also be used to build alignment and to bring teachers together across departments and grade levels. We want to ensure that what scholars learn in one grade level or course, is very strategically and purposefully setting them up for success in the following grade. In addition to Professional Development time, teachers and staff will receive individualized support through classroom observations and tailored coaching. We don't

want to have teachers operating in silos, so instead we will create similar teaching elements that will resonate with students as they move through the grade levels.

- **Recruiting and retaining the strongest teachers and staff members.** Our teachers are incredibly important as they are the ones in the classrooms, with our scholars each and every day. We understand the critical role they play in students' lives, and we pride ourselves on making sure they feel valued and respected and are well-compensated for their incredible accomplishments. We provide positive coaching and a strong professional development training system so that our teachers will continue to grow and are the best equipped to teach our students.
- **Creating alignment between middle schools.** We will be merging our two middle schools over the next two years. We have learned that having two small middle schools on the same campus leads to inefficiencies and prevents us from offering students more class options and electives such as foreign language, skills we know our students need to compete at the next level. PS7M and OPPA have been two of the top performing middle schools in the city and we believe that combining forces will allow us to scale and ultimately serve more students, better. This means that there will be an even greater focus on ensuring that the foundational skills introduced in the lower grades prepare our scholars for middle and high school.
- **Implementing clear and simple systems for communication between our schools and your homes.** We are closing gaps in communication by adopting reliable and easy methods for sending home information.
- **Providing valuable wraparound services.** We are committed to being a family extension for our scholars and families and starting this school year we will be providing free breakfast and lunch on all of our campuses. We also provide additional wraparound supports such as mobile dental clinics, eye exams, small workgroups to focus on coping and conflict management skills, and career and college field days for our scholars.

We are going to be taking it to the next level at SHPS. Our aim is to be the best urban public school system in the country. Your student's education is in our hands, and we are truly honored by that privilege. We will push our top scholars to their next level, while also providing supplemental and target support for our scholars who are working to close gaps to bring their skills up to grade level.

I'm committed to ensuring quality education, providing new variety in our programming, and creating a place where every scholar has the opportunity to be challenged, feel joy, and find success at school. I am looking forward to embarking on this journey with all of you!

Thank you, and I look forward to seeing you on campus in August!

Kari Wehrly