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July 30, 2021

Dear HPA Family,

I am honored and humbled to be the new Superintendent of High Point Academy. My first few weeks have been exciting as I met with administrators, teachers, and staff to collaborate on innovative pathways to student achievement for the new school year. As a father and grandfather, I take this responsibility very seriously. My goal is to support and help every student in the journey to learn, grow and be better prepared for the future. I am looking forward to getting to know you - the support system behind these young people at the center of everything we do. YOU play a vital role in their success, and for those of you whom I have met, I am very encouraged by your willingness to do whatever is necessary to help our students succeed. I would like to open the level of communication with opportunities for us to learn from one another. In the weeks ahead, you will be invited to breakfast information sessions here on campus. It will be a way for me to share details about HPA and where we are, and the vision of where we are heading. It will also provide a chance for you to ask questions and provide input to propel us forward.

Until then, I would like to give you a preview of our plans for 2021-2022. Safety and academic success are our top priorities. Unfortunately, our school, like most, had a drop in test scores due to COVID 19. As a result, I have hired data coaches and reading recovery staff to assist our teachers in helping every student reach their full potential. We are also revisiting safety plans to ensure that students and staff are as safe as possible while here at HPA.

It is our mission to educate the whole child. As a result, dynamic energy is flowing around the school as we strive to improve across the board:

- I am pleased to welcome Russell Mahaffey as our new high school principal. Mr. Mahaffey's broad educational experience, deep personal integrity, and commitment to student achievement make him an excellent fit for our school.
- As a STEAM-based school, we are committed to hands-on, project-based learning.
- I am working closely with our Director of Fine Arts, Mr. Ryan Bishop, to make sure we continue to support and expand our Performing Arts Program.

- We have some very successful athletic teams here at HPA. Plans exist to add athletic fields to our facility when we can afford to do so. Fundraising will play a key role, and we are counting on your help and support to make this possible.
- Our goal is to have a new field for our elementary children for recess as well. We hope to begin this project in the fall and complete it before the holidays.
- We are working hard to expand career opportunities for your students to take to the workforce or carry over into college credit. Classes that include Drone Pilot Certification set us apart.
- For students who are achieving dual enrollment and AP classes, we are looking to expand our offerings and bring AP courses to HPA. We already have AP-certified teachers and want to make sure we are laying the groundwork in our 9th and 10th-grade classes to ensure success in these high-level opportunities.

We have work ahead and positive momentum in our favor. It is a great time to be a Grizzly as we enter the new school year with enrollment numbers at their highest in High Point Academy history - going against the national trend in public education. I am looking forward to a fantastic future at HPA with the HPA family. Many thanks to Chairman Rob Gouge and the Board for placing their confidence and trust in me as we forge our partnership for the future success of High Point Academy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ben J. Shera".

Superintendent