

January 21, 2022

## HOPE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS ANNOUNCEMENT

**MILWAUKEE** — HOPE Christian Schools issued the following statement:

*HOPE Christian Schools recently completed a strategic growth plan that will be implemented beginning in 2022 which includes greater allocation of resources toward its growing of academically successful K-8 schools and investment in staff development.*

*In order to deal with ongoing inadequate state funding and the growing teacher shortage crisis, HOPE Christian High School will cease operations at the end of the 2021-22 academic year, and we will re-purpose the building to expand HOPE Fortis serving 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students.*

*The decision to close the high school was made with great care and is driven by two primary causes, funding and teacher shortages. State funding has been significantly inadequate to support long-term high-quality outcomes at HOPE Christian High School, and over time, this challenge has only gotten worse with no end in sight. We do not believe we can provide the depth and breadth of offerings we desire for the high school at the current funding levels. Teacher shortages are particularly difficult for high schools in urban areas. COVID has accelerated an already significant teacher shortage, and our efforts will be best served attracting, developing, and retaining leaders and teachers in our K-8 schools. We have seen our greatest strength and highest community demand for our K-8 schools.*

*We are committed to working with HOPE Christian High School scholars to ensure the best outcomes possible for this school year and their future education and career path. We will also support our dedicated faculty and staff at the high school through various means including helping them secure other job opportunities within the HOPE network.*

*As one of the largest and highest performing K-8 Parental Choice networks in Milwaukee, HOPE Christian Schools is investing substantially in continual improvements and growth to meet the community demand for high-quality K-8 schools on the north side of Milwaukee. There are several immediate HOPE K-8 expansion projects being planned. In addition, plans are in the works to grow the HOPE regional offices and training space. All of HOPE's K-8 schools rated either 3 (meets) or 4 (exceeds) stars in the latest Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction report card and are significantly outperforming the local district, charter sector and school choice sector averages. We believe focusing on our K-8 schools provides the best opportunity to fulfill our mission of helping address education needs in our community.*

*Long term, the solution to challenges like the one we are facing now must include remedying the woefully inadequate state funding and teacher shortage issues that are particularly problematic at the high school level. We remain committed to operating quality schools and working to find policy solutions that will allow us and other schools to serve families who want choices and access to high-quality education.*