



August 15, 2019

To the Guilford County Community:

As principals united in our devotion to serving the more than 14,000 students and families who attend school in High Point, we are proud to be a part of the Guilford County Schools under the leadership of our Superintendent, Dr. Sharon L. Contreras. The GCS school district is the third largest school district in North Carolina and the 47th largest school district in the United States.

Sadly, our excitement about the start of a new school year is being overshadowed by Mayor Jay R. Wagner's surprise announcement recently regarding the future of Guilford's schools located in High Point. Embedded in the Mayor's remarks made during his State of the City address is the implication that we are failing to educate High Point's children well. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Public schools reflect the communities in which they exist. The poverty rate in High Point, represents some of the most concentrated poverty in Guilford County and in North Carolina. We feel and see the impact of extreme poverty in the faces of our students every day. Our core business is teaching and learning and though as educators we try, we cannot be expected to resolve all the issues our students face. Our students are impacted by adverse childhood experiences including racism, poverty, poor housing, hunger, violence, and joblessness.

As educators, we believe passionately in the power of great public schools to make a positive difference in the lives of children and young people. We also recognize that our schools don't operate in a vacuum. Family income, parent/guardian educational levels and our community's economic status have a significant impact. Our schools need more tangible assistance and partnerships, not more criticism from those in leadership. We need better public policies and authentic economic development that address systemic and structural inequities so that our children and families can thrive. And we need more resources allocated to GCS to remove barriers to learning. We also need our leaders to advocate for better pay for our teachers and support staff. GCS ranks ninth in the state for teacher supplements. City leadership should be advocating to county officials for increasing teacher pay in lieu of exploring secession from GCS at the very time when our schools are making unprecedented change and progress under current district leadership.

While we are committed to transforming High Point students' learning and life outcomes and will bravely strive toward that goal, we cannot achieve this on our own. If we could, we would have done so long ago. As proud principals in Guilford County who enthusiastically serve High Point schools, we stand determined and ready to work together with our elected leaders and business and faith community to benefit all our children and their families. Consequently, the twenty-five of us will encourage our faculties, our staffs, our families, and our friends to support leaders at every level who support education in word and deed.

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Guilford County Schools administers all educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, marital status, parental status, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Sincerely,

Carla S. Ballesteros

Allen Jay Elementary School; Carla Flores-Ballesteros, Principal

Kevin L. Wheat

Allen Jay Middle-A Preparatory Academy, Kevin Wheat, Principal

Marcus Gause
T.W. Andrews High School, Marcus Gause, Principal

Tanicka Robeson
Dean B. Pruett SCALE; Tanicka Robeson, Principal

Wesley Abe Hege
Fairview Elementary School; Wesley Abe Hege, Principal

Leslie Kinard
Ferndale Middle School, Leslie Kinard; Principal

Chiyanna Young
Florence Elementary School, Chiyanna Young, Principal

Shelly Nixon Green
High Point Central High School; Shelly Nixon Green, Principal

Kristina Wheat
Johnson Street-Global Studies; Kristina Wheat, Principal

Bryan Johnson
Kearns Academy @ Central; Bryan Johnson, Principal

Jamal Crawford
Kirkman Park Elementary School; Jamal Crawford, Principal

Darrell Harris
Middle College @ Guilford Technical Community College High Point; Darrell Harris, Principal

Kimberly Scott
Montlieu Academy; Kimberly Scott, Principal

Susan Steen
Northwood Elementary School; Susan Steen

Candice Bailey
Oak Hill Elementary School; Candice Bailey, Principal

Heather Bare
Oak View Elementary School; Heather Bare, Principal

Crystal Gregory
Parkview Elementary School; Crystal Gregory, Principal



Howard Stimpson

Penn-Griffin School for the Arts; Howard Stimpson, Principal

George Green

Shadybrook Elementary School; George Green, Principal

Michelle Thigpen

Southwest Elementary School; Michelle Thigpen, Principal

Michael Hettenbach

Southwest High School; Michael Hettenbach, Principal

Arlisa Armond

Southwest Middle School; Arlisa Armond, Principal

Pamela Ford

Triangle Lake Montessori; Pamela Ford, Principal

Shayla Savage

Union Hill Elementary School; Shayla Savage, Principal

Ashauna Harris

Welborn Academy; Ashauna Harris, Principal

