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St. HOPE Public Schools Announces the Opening of a New Middle School, Oak Park Prep

St. HOPE Public Schools is proud to announce the opening of its new middle school, Oak Park Preparatory Academy (Oak Park Prep), in August of 2012. Oak Park Prep's purpose is to educate students in grades seven and eight to excel in a rigorous college-prep high school, succeed at a four-year university, and lead in their chosen profession. Oak Park Prep will enroll 60 seventh grade students for its first class and will eventually educate approximately 180 students in grades seven and eight at full capacity.

On Thursday evening, October 6th, the Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) Board of Education voted to approve Oak Park Prep's charter. The public comment given during the meeting demonstrated strong support and community demand for the new school. Fifteen individuals - parents, students, educators, pastors, and community members - gave public comment and every one of them asked the board to approve Oak Park Prep.

Oak Park Prep will be St. HOPE Public Schools fourth school, and first 7th and 8th grade middle school. St. HOPE also operates Triumph Center for Early Childhood Education, PS7, and Sacramento Charter High School - all of which are located in the Oak Park neighborhood.

Oak Park Prep will allow more students and families access to a high quality, college-prep school system in their community. Oak Park Prep will be the neighborhood's first stand alone middle school since 1963 when the Oak Park's previous middle school was burned down. Prior to the approval of this new school, Oak Park's middle school students have spent the last fifty years attending one of three middle schools outside of the neighborhood with some students traveling up to four miles. In addition, middle school students have no access to free bussing, so transportation to and from school was at the expense of individual families.

In the coming months, St. HOPE Public Schools and the Founding Principal of Oak Park Prep, Paul Schwinn, will be writing curriculum, hiring teachers, and engaging the community in preparation of welcoming its first class of 7th grade scholars in August. Principal Schwinn is currently studying the highest performing middle schools in the country, including PS7, so that Oak Park Prep students receive the best education in the nation. Principal Schwinn stated that "We are hard at work planning our school down to the smallest detail so that starting in August every second of every day is spent on providing our students with the high-quality, college-prep education they deserve."

All families interested in enrolling their rising 7th graders are encouraged to apply. Parents, families, and students may contact Principal Schwinn at paschwinn@sthopepublicschools.org or (916) 533-4861 for more information. Additional enrollment information will be posted soon at www.sthopepublicschools.org and outreach will begin this month to community organizations in and around Oak Park. Please note that as a public charter school Oak Park Prep is open to any resident of the state of California. Furthermore, admission is done by a random lottery which preferences students living within the boundaries of SCUSD.

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About St. HOPE Public Schools

St. HOPE (SHPS) Public Schools is a free public charter school system that focuses on students from low-income and minority backgrounds, providing them with a high-quality, rigorous college preparatory education. PS7 (grades K-8), Oak Park Prep (grades 7-8), and Sacramento Charter High School (grades 9-12) provide personalized attention to their students, committing more time with an extended school day to achieve academic results. SHPS also operates Triumph Center for Early Childhood Education, a public preschool providing unique early childhood education to approximately 65 children. These schools serve approximately 1,500 students.