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H-F senior Jaden Sharp to attend Princeton University

BY MARILYN THOMAS
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Jaden Sharp, a senior at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, is gearing up for an Ivy League education at Princeton University.

Sharp said Princeton was one of several choices, and he's anxious to attend the highly competitive school because it will offer him "a high caliber education and it just seemed like a good fit." He's looking forward to his visit to the campus in New Jersey in April.

Sharp plans to major in electrical and computer engineering. He wants to prepare to use quantum engineering, a new specialty in engineering, that will help make improvements to car batteries and for use in other industries.

"That really piqued my interest in the major," he said. Quantum science and engineering at Princeton is supported by the Princeton Quantum Initiative.

Sharp has been part of H-F's International Baccalaureate Program and will receive an IB certificate for his high academic achievements. He is part of the National Honor Society and helped found H-F's Black Student Union. The group recently participated in the Pursuing the Dream program at H-F centered around Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday celebration.

Sharp also has been a member of the track team at H-F. He runs hurdles and also has been a team member for the 4x400 and 4x200 races. He first got introduced to track as a student at Parker Junior High School.



Jaden Sharp

For Sharp, track is "a good way to stay active and dedicate myself to something that isn't just academics," he said.

Outside of H-F, Sharp is active in Jack & Jill of America, a membership organization that addresses issues affecting African American children and families by investing in programs and services that create a strong foundation for children to thrive.

Sharp serves as vice president, of the organization's South Suburban Chicago chapter and previously served as foundation chair, nominating committee chair and on the legislative committee. He also is the second chair of the regional nominating committee for the organization's Mid-Western Region serving 40 chapters.

Sharp, son of Alfred Sharp of Flossmoor, said he will miss the friends he's made at H-F and the teachers who have been aspirational, but he is ready for what comes next.

D161 selects Ursula Parris next junior high principal

BY CHRONICLE STAFF

The District 161 school board approved a contract with Ursula Parris to serve as the next principal at Parker Junior High School in Flossmoor.

Parris will come to the district starting July 1 after serving as a school administrator in Florida where she has nearly 15 years of school administration experience. She has been in education for the last 27 years.

According to a report presented to the school board by Eric Melnyczenko, director of human resources, at the board's Feb. 28 meeting, Parris is credited with turning around her current school, improving its accountability score from an F to a B within her first two years.



Ursula Parris

The district started its search with a pool of 55 candidates that was narrowed to eight and eventually four finalists.

Parris's starting salary will be \$135,000. She was given a two-year performance-based

contract linked to student performance and academic achievement.

Amabel Crawford has been serving as Parker's principal the past two years. She plans to return to her prior role as director of learning and instruction.