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An Open Letter to Students Returning to School

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I've spent years and years of my life in school. I've had some good years and some hard years. In fact, school has been the source of some of my fondest memories. It has, undoubtedly, also been the source of much sadness, confusion, and anger. High school can (and probably will be) a time of turbulence and questioning. If I'm being honest, I *know* that school just downright sucks some days. You're forced day in and day out to do things that you don't necessarily want to do, let alone see the value in. You might wonder very often, why on earth you're *forced* to learn so many things you see no value in. But I encourage you to find activities, people and things that you *do* like about school.

Like I've already said, high school is an odd time for most. When I personally look back at my time in high school, I sometimes cringe. I wasn't always the person I wanted to be. And I certainly cringe at how I treated some people. I know you've heard this a million times, but remember that how you treat fellow classmates, teachers, coaches, etc. will stay with you for a long, long time. Remember this: your actions have consequences. I mean that in the biggest way possible. Your good actions will provide you much more long-term joy than your poor choices will. Of course, I know, we all make mistakes. And I bet most of your

teachers know this too. We, your teachers, are here to help and be as understanding as possible. No one is expecting you to be perfect. But here's one thing I can advise you: treat everyone with respect. Just like in life, you are *not* going to like everyone. That's a fact. But you *can* be respectful with everyone. It's going to get you a lot further in the long run.

So here is another piece of advice. Find your people. Find people that make you feel good, that you can be yourself with and that are *there* for you. Also, make sure that you have adults you can lean on. For some, this might be parents, for others it might be teachers or coaches. I truly believe everyone needs to have *someone*. There are people all around you in this building that are here to help you (even if you don't always believe it). Here's another truth: math, science, English, all your classes are important. But you know what is more important? How you feel when you're in the building and how you feel at the end of the day. My wish for you is that you can find something to immerse yourself in and that you can become a fulfilled human in your very own high school.

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