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What excites me about the Rising Phoenix Early College High School program is the opportunity for students to take college classes and earn both a high school diploma and an Associate of Arts and Sciences degree at the same time. I have already been trying to get the most learning out of my classes and get a head start on a college degree by taking advanced placement and accelerated courses. I hope to have finished most of my general education classes by the time I graduate high school, but being able to finish a two-year degree while I am still in high school would be an amazing opportunity. I am very excited about accelerated learning. One of the most frustrating parts of high school for me is students who don't want to learn and mostly disrupt the class. I am scheduled to take my first class with UWGB over the summer and have already read one of the textbooks and am starting on the second!

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Due to COVID 19, last year I had to quickly shift to an online school in Grantsburg called IForward. At this school, to my shock and horror, two of my classes did not have a teacher dedicated to them. This meant if I had a question, instead of using my go-to strategy of asking the teacher for clarification, I needed to find alternate methods. In addition to leaning heavily on the textbooks I was given for the classes, I found that using additional online books and publications was particularly helpful for explaining topics I did not understand the first time. For my Spanish class specifically, I found that studying from an additional online Spanish course was very helpful. I found Spanish Dict online with grammatical rules, lessons, an English/Spanish dictionary, and wordreference.com. Having several options was very helpful.

Over this school year, I have learned that tutors are another feasible option. Although I have yet to need to hire a tutor, my cousin who teaches Spanish and one of my mother's former coworkers who taught psychology have both helped me study for the midterm and final exams in Spanish and AP Psychology. My former teachers are also a valuable resource, I occasionally email them with questions. My immediate family is a source of academic support, both my parents value my education highly and I know that I am able to rely on them to help me with school work. Likewise, my sisters and I often take similar classes so that we are able to help one another study. While taking college-level work, I believe I will be able to use similar academic supports, such as using additional online resources or finding a tutor.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has not helped me find additional social support half as much as it did academic support. Nevertheless, I am extremely lucky to have a lot of social support in my life. I have family members, particularly my parents, who offer unconditional positive regard and who I can rely on. I am able to talk, or occasionally complain, with my siblings about things if I am upset and they are there to listen and help me. On top of that, I can normally establish good relationships with my teachers. I believe this is important because I have found that when I value my teacher's opinion of me, I am more driven to do well in the class and I am also more comfortable asking them for help when I need it. While taking college-level work, I am sure that I would have people there to support me and encourage me to do the best that I can. Because of the social support I have in my life, I believe that I am able to cope healthfully with stress and have the confidence to take on difficult tasks.

I believe that I, and many others, have shown Grit during the COVID 19 pandemic. We all have shown resolve when deciding to sacrifice our favorite activities for our safety. We've shown strength of character when we put the safety of others before our desire for social gatherings, and we've shown courage when we risk getting a new vaccination in order to end the pandemic. Recently there have been many changes in our lives that we require GRIT to overcome. One academic challenge that I have recently shown GRIT to overcome was an online Spanish class. In the ninth grade, before the COVID-19 crisis, I loved my Spanish classes. I enjoyed the memorization games and vocabulary-themed skits we put on. It was a fun class and I thought I was good at it. My favorite part of the class were the live discussions. Sadly, about a month before my tenth-grade Spanish class was scheduled to start, I was told that too few students were interested in taking the class. No live Spanish class would be offered, but I could still take Spanish as a self-led class, kind of like an independent study. The school purchased a ready-made curriculum and offered a "resource teacher" who would be there just to grade the written work. It would all be vocabulary and grammar.

I was terrified to take a Spanish class without a teacher to help me and disappointed that my favorite parts of the class would be erased. But, I wanted to continue learning Spanish, so I signed up for the class. In going through with taking Spanish class despite there being no live class I believe I demonstrated courage, I was terrified to take a Spanish class without a teacher to help me but I still did so. The beginning of the class did little to reassure me. Despite my studying and stressing, the first score I received was sixty percent. This was not on par with where I wanted to have my grades so I dedicated more time studying for the class and revised assignments I was not satisfied with. Since then, I have been determined to keep my grade above eighty-five percent, and have succeeded in doing so. I showed resolve when I strived to improve

a grade that was not up to my standards. I demonstrated strength of character when persevering through difficult assignments and practicing academic integrity throughout the course. I believe I used GRIT to overcome the challenge of adapting to a different form of Spanish class, and although it was not as enjoyable a class as it would have normally been, I think that I gained valuable knowledge and experience by taking it.