

# Heights Christian Junior High

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January 19, 2010

Dear Future HCJH Families and Students:

Many of you may have become aware that I will be stepping down next year as the full time principal of Heights Christian Jr. High. I am not “leaving” the Heights, just transitioning to another role. But first I want to tell you the “story” about the door that God has opened, and I want to make sure that some important things are known.

As you may or may not know, I graduated from Biola University with a degree in Physical Education and have a passion for athletics. Over the years I have watched hundreds of my former students go on to Whittier Christian High, and now I have been offered the chance to be a part of the high school life....something that I originally wanted to do in my career. Beginning this summer I will be taking on a role with a different ministry serving as part of the administrative team at Whittier Christian High School. My main responsibilities will lie in the position of Athletic Director, but I will also be involved in some other areas of high school life that will fit my strengths. Many people leave jobs because they are dissatisfied with what they have been doing. That is CERTAINLY NOT the case for me. I have loved what I have done for the past eleven years at Heights Christian Junior High. I truly believe that God called me to HCJH for the time that I have been here. This is simply a new chapter in my life that I firmly believe is the right thing for myself and my family.

Any time there are changes of this magnitude there are questions that are going to be asked, and I want to make sure that the following is known and understood:

- I am NOT leaving because of any problems within the school organization! It seems that almost any time someone leaves a job there is speculation as to WHY. The purpose of this letter is to make sure that the WHY is very well understood. This is one of those situations that I simply have felt God’s calling to do something else in my career. If you asked my wife Angie, she would tell you that she and I have been discussing this for probably the past three years. I have felt a “stirring” in my heart to use my gifts and passions in the area of athletics, and have been asking God to give me a clear direction. I tend to not make hasty decisions, and it took a long time, and the right opportunity, for me to step down as principal at HCJH. I was not actively seeking another position, but when God opened the right door for me I needed to step through it.
- Because HCJH is SO IMPORTANT to me, it has been very important that things will be left in good hands once this transition has taken place. The FRM leadership team invited me to play an active role in the search and selection of my own replacement. I am happy to state that the future administrative team at HCJH will be comprised of “HCJH people”! ***Our school is what it is because of the high-quality people and the excellent programs that make up HCJH***, and I will truly miss working daily with this tremendous staff. One of the things I most appreciate about FRM is the benefit of leadership within the system that insures that the integrity and quality of programs remain consistent and of the highest priority for each student.

- The staff, leadership and I have already begun preparing for the transition which will naturally take place. As stated before, I will be staying involved, though you won't see me on a daily basis. As you might guess, it is VERY UNUSUAL for these kinds of changes to be set in place so early. Not at the Heights! We have taken the time to prayerfully and carefully work on this transition. God will continue to work here through the dedicated staff and programs that make the HCJH what it is. We are all confident and excited about this next chapter of the Heights Christian Junior High.

It is with personal pride and joy that I announce that **Mr. Nicholas Damico** will be taking the helm at HCJH as principal next year. Mr. Damico served on our staff from 2005 to 2008, and at that time it became evident that Mr. Damico had a future in school administration. Mr. Damico holds a clear California teaching credential and his Masters in Education. He is additionally completing his Administrative credential. Therefore I am very excited that he is coming back to HCJH to pursue his goals and career! He has spent the last two years preparing for an opportunity such as this one and I truly believe that God has orchestrated this in His right timing. If I weren't so sure that God is calling me to WCHS I could almost be a little bothered by how excited they are for the return of Mr. Damico and their confidence that he is the right man for the job! And after several years in public school, *Mr. Damico is even more convinced than ever that Christian education and the Heights Christian Jr. High are exactly what teens need in these crucial years.*

Mr. Damico and I look forward to working with each of you. We are confident that God continues to have great things in store for HCJH. Please know that the door is always open should you have any questions or concerns. We look forward to having you here soon!

Sincerely in Christ,



Rolland Esslinger, Principal  
Heights Christian Junior High School