



STARKVILLE ACADEMY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

January 13, 2014

Dear Patrons, Faculty, and Staff:

In October, the Board of Directors received notice from Mr. John "Doc" Stephens that he planned to retire at the conclusion of the 2013-2014 academic year. At that time, the Board began the process of seeking a new Head of School for Starkville Academy.

After consulting with patrons and former Board members who were involved with previous searches, the Board developed a position announcement that was posted with the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS) and the Southern Association of Independent Schools (SAIS). In addition, the position announcement was posted on the Starkville Academy website and a hard copy was sent to every member school in the MAIS. A search committee of board members was then formed to meet with the executive director of the MAIS about potential candidates and the best practices for conducting a candidate search, to review applications, and to complete preliminary phone and in-person interviews with candidates.

Following this lengthy due-diligence process, the Board invited six candidates to Starkville for interviews with the full Board. After careful consideration, the Board unanimously elected to offer the Head of School position to Mr. Jeremy Nicholas, who currently is serving as Head of School at Park Place Christian Academy. We are pleased to report that Mr. Nicholas has formally accepted our offer and will become the next Head of School at Starkville Academy.

Mr. Nicholas earned a Bachelor of Science in social studies education and a Master of Science in geosciences from Mississippi State University, and he later earned an Education Specialist Degree in educational leadership from Mississippi College. Mr. Nicholas also holds AAA certification from the MAIS. A former faculty member, coach, and director of various administrative programs at Jackson Preparatory School, Mr. Nicholas has been committed to providing the highest quality college-preparatory curriculum in a Christian environment at Park Place Christian Academy. Under his leadership, Park Place Christian Academy has seen unprecedented growth, academic achievements, and athletic enhancements, as it has grown to a school of over 600 students.

During the interview process, Mr. Nicholas demonstrated a strong vision and a clear plan for enhancing Starkville Academy's spiritual, academic, athletic, and extracurricular offerings. His enthusiasm, energy level, and desire to strengthen the relationship between Starkville Academy and the local and university communities will generate numerous opportunities for our faculty, staff and students.

Mr. Nicholas and his family are excited about this opportunity to work with all of us to develop Starkville Academy into one of the leading independent schools in the region and the state. Although his official start date will be Monday, July 7, 2014, the Board of Directors will be working closely with Mr. Nicholas to identify qualified candidates and fill the elementary principal position that will be vacated at the end of the school year.

As we begin this exciting new chapter for Starkville Academy, we hope that you will extend a warm welcome to Jeremy, his wife Sarah, their eight-year-old son Charlie, and their five-year-old daughter, Mary Holland.

Sincerely,

Leann Markham, Ph.D.
Board President