

Facebook Post

When I came to Oak Ridge High School two and a half years ago, I had dreams of making this a world-class school where every student of every skill level, background, ethnicity and orientation had an opportunity to shine. With the help of our amazing staff, our students rose to the challenge, proving you could have respect for all while elevating the levels of academic achievement, athletics, arts, leadership and any number of the powerful clubs and programs on our campus. Oak Ridge's parents proved that El Dorado Hills is an unbelievable place to live, filled with those who support their children and give generously to all programs at Oak Ridge. Together, we all saw our campus culture improve, test scores rise, championships won, scholarships earned, and learning abound in a safe and respectful environment.

My wife and children have sacrificed greatly for Oak Ridge, too. I made it a point to get to work early, stay late and attend as many events as I could so that our students could see that their principal was as committed to their school as they were. This meant time away from my wife and kids—time that I'll never get back but that I know was worth the sacrifice for this great community.

I was falsely accused of sexual harassment in October and I immediately reported it to the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. Despite the district's acknowledgement very early on that the accusation was completely unfounded, I was placed on administrative leave while the district continued to entertain additional unfounded allegations from the same accuser. Each time they closed the door on one allegation, a new, even more outrageous allegation, would surface. No person can thrive, let alone exist, in any employment situation where the leadership allows this to continue and does nothing to stop it. During this process, I chose to remain silent publicly as I held out hope for my return to Oak Ridge. It was my belief that as each of these allegations were proven to be completely false I would move closer to returning to Oak Ridge. Unfortunately, with each false allegation, and spread of the ensuing rumor, the culture at Oak Ridge deteriorated, thus diminishing my ability to return and lead successfully.

As great as Oak Ridge is, no principal can thrive under district leadership that has twice encouraged his resignation under the shadow of false allegations and has made it clear that they do not support the direction of the school, its Foundation, or his broad and innovative leadership vision. Any chance that I had of successfully returning back to Oak Ridge has been destroyed by the manner in which this situation has been handled and the length of time it has taken to arrive at a resolution. The chances of my return eroded with every passing day in which the rumors and false allegations were allowed to spread. And while I have never been the type to seek redress from a courtroom, the district has left me little choice but to go to a place where due process still exists.

While I have been off these past four months on leave, I have seen the toll this situation has taken on my wife and children. I'm grateful that the Board of Trustees has finally made a decision tonight that will allow us to move forward as a family.

To the past, current, and future Oak Ridge High School Trojans and their families, in addition to the great many incredible staff members at Oak Ridge, I wish you all the very best. Pam and I are incredibly grateful for the support we have received. We have been truly touched and humbled by the outpouring of love and kindness that has been shown to our family over the past four months.

Sincerely,

Paul