



DEER CREEK

PRIDE

Spring/Summer 2017

Mission

Deer Creek Christian School partners with families to help children grow in **Academics, Faith,** and **Character** for Kingdom service.



PRINCIPAL'S POST

ALWAYS GROWING

by *Brian Verwolf*
Head of School

When I think of “growth,” I think of Tiger Woods, who won eight major golf championships faster than anyone in history—and then decided his swing needed an overhaul.

That rejection of “good enough” in order to keep getting better—that’s growth. That’s what I hear when my 8th-grade algebra student turns in a quiz and admits, “Mr. Verwolf, I’m not there yet. I need more practice.”

I love that word “yet.”

At Deer Creek we know that to fulfill our mission, we need to keep growing. We’ve grown a lot in a short time. In just over two years...

- We’ve moved to a new location
- Enrollment is up 21%
- Extracurriculars are back
- We established two years of mission-driven budgets
- Relationship-based fundraising has been transformational
- We established a Strategic Plan
- Our marketing is more focused
- We revitalized Board Governance

This growth is exciting—but we’re not done yet! Deer Creek is always growing! Individual students are growing and learning and changing. And we as a Deer Creek community are growing in depth and in numbers.

Over the past few months Deer Creek has also focused on growing our instructional program, and we anticipate a great deal of movement in curriculum, instruction, and assessment of student learning. Newly adopted academic standards will serve as guideposts for our educational program. Why? Because students can learn better in a standards-based environment. When teachers, students, parents, and administrators all work toward the same goal and reinforce it with each other, growth multiplies.

We believe that Christian education done well will have an impact that grows too—among our friends and neighbors, into the south suburbs, throughout the Midwest, and across our country.

These are exciting times at Deer Creek! Will you grow with us? 🇺🇸

DEER CREEK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Preschool–8th grade

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Chicago Heights, IL 60411
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 facebook.com/
DeerCreekChristianSchool

STAFFING UPDATE

GREETINGS AND GOODBYES

At the close of this year we will say goodbye to four beloved teachers.

Mrs. Erica Galloy (K3) will pursue the role of full-time mom. We are grateful for her leadership in our early childhood program over the past 5 years. We'll miss her Mother's Day tea parties, Donuts for Dads, and of course, the way she showed love to our three-year-olds by setting the bar high for their young minds.

Mrs. Randi Chambers (MS Math/ Science) will follow God's call to homeschool her own three children. We will deeply miss the Chambers family, and we are grateful for the transformational ways they contributed to our school mission.

Ms. Azure Dobson (PE) has completed her role as Interim Physical Educator for the Spring semester. She built deep relationships with students, and

we'll miss her catchy energy, and especially her rhythm dancing.

Last, we will be saying goodbye to **Mr. Ron Kuiper** (MS Math/ Science) who is "retiring" after 45 years of teaching at Christ-centered schools—14 of those at Deer Creek. Mr. Kuiper always demanded the best from our students, and we're so grateful for that. We'll miss his dry sense of humor, his quirky jokes that people catch minutes later, and even his Green Bay Packer gear. We are thankful for his hard work and dedication to hundreds of students over the years.

These four teachers helped create an environment that is attractive to others who are eager to make a Kingdom difference, so we are thrilled to welcome **Ms. Erinn Behn** to our teaching staff in the fall! Ms. Behn was born and raised in

Crete, IL, and is a proud Deer Creek graduate. She will serve as our Athletic Director, K-8 PE teacher, and Middle School Language Arts teacher. She comes to Deer Creek after teaching PE for two years at Tipton Middle School in Tipton, IN, and coaching Tipton High School's women's basketball team. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Taylor University, majoring in Health and Physical Education and added a coaching Minor to her credentials. She enjoys building relationships with students while intrinsically motivating them to reach their unique potential. ♥

Deer Creek is hiring! We are currently seeking a full-time Preschool teacher and a Middle School Science & Technology teacher. Visit deercreek.org/about-us/employment/ for more information about applying.

ALUMNI, ILLUMINATED

"A STRONG ACADEMIC AND SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION"



by Katelyn Dircks (Boicken), 2007

It's hard to believe it has been almost 10 years since I graduated from Deer Creek in 2007. In many ways it feels like just yesterday that I walked the halls of Deer Creek as a Lion!

After graduating, I attended Peotone High School and then Olivet Nazarene University. I double-majored in Social Work and Criminal Justice at ONU, and then decided to pursue my Master's in Social Work, which I earned in May 2016 from Aurora University. I have experience working in mental health and in public schools. Now I work full-time as a Licensed Social Worker at Riverside Medical Center in Kankakee.

I will forever be grateful for the strong academic

DEER CREEK CLASS OF 2017

The mission of Deer Creek is to partner with families to help children grow in Academics, Faith, and Character for Kingdom service. Each year's graduation is an opportunity to celebrate this mission together—and to bless these students as they take their next steps on their path in God's Kingdom. Congratulations Class of 2017! 🍷



AJ Ariado

AJ is headed to Illiana Christian High School next, and then to Olivet Nazarene University. He has appreciated the opportunity to make Christian friends at Deer Creek, and he especially enjoyed when he and Jackie celebrated their birthdays with their friends at school.

Taylor Carlson

After attending Illiana Christian High School, Taylor is hoping to play college volleyball and major in Computer Engineering. She advises new Deer Creek students to “listen to their teachers and work hard in everything they do. Also make friendships that will last for a lifetime.”

Jackie Lopez

Jackie is planning to attend Illinois Lutheran High School, with a long-range plan of becoming a veterinarian. She has enjoyed “amazing” friendships at Deer Creek, and she appreciates having teachers who will “stop at nothing” to help students succeed.

Love Agulefo

Rich South High School is where Love is headed next, and she already knows she'll continue on to college because that will equip her with more options for “experimenting in her career.” She recognizes that her time at Deer Creek was about “growing up and changing for the better.”

Aidan Krainik

Aidan will attend Providence Catholic High School, and his five-year plan is to play hockey in the NHL. He remembers playing Monopoly in Mrs. Deur's eighth-grade English class—and losing all his money! His Deer Creek teachers made learning fun, and Aidan appreciates how nice everyone is.

and spiritual foundation I built while at Deer Creek. I truly had the full experience and was a student from preschool all the way through eighth grade! From a young age, I remember learning the importance of treating others with kindness and respect. Looking back, I see more clearly than ever how the teachers and staff at Deer Creek taught us to value our education, but most

important, to value our relationship and walk with Jesus Christ.

In my career as a Social Worker, I work every day with people who are hurting and broken in many different ways. I feel that Deer Creek helped to shape the type of person that I am today and helped foster in me a heart that longs to grow closer to God through serving of others—what a powerful thing!

On a personal note, I got married this past June to my best friend, Brennan. Needless to say, life has been busy but wonderful.

Congratulations to the Deer Creek Class of 2017—may God continue to enrich and bless your lives! 🍷

Deer Creek graduates, we'd love to hear from you! Please email us and share where you are and what you're doing: info@dccsonline.org.



DEER CREEK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

330 W. Highland Drive • Chicago Heights, IL 60411

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ACADEMICS, FAITH, CHARACTER

YOU GROWING US

*by Steve Blom,
Development Director*

“Will you take time out of your schedule, join us for dinner, give us a donation, and help shape our understanding of Christ-centered education?” When you say it out loud, it sounds selfish, really. But this is essentially what we’ve done over the past three months—and we couldn’t be happier with the outcome!

Let me explain. Over the past few years, one of the things we’ve come to realize and appreciate is that we belong to a much larger web of people and institutions committed to the growth and long-term health of Christ-centered education. We’ve

also found that the more we connect and speak into each other’s lives, rooted in this common mission, the better we all become.

This is the reason for Deer Creek Dinners. Through these smaller gatherings in Sioux Center, IA, Dyer, IN, and Grand Rapids, MI, we have had the incredible opportunity to enjoy a meal together, tell Deer Creek’s story, invite people to support our mission, and have thoughtful and engaging discussions about the value of Christ-centered education. At the end of each session, we have felt encouraged to more fully pursue our mission: partnering with families to help children grow in Academics, Faith, and Character for Kingdom service.

Thanks to you, we have raised



\$67,000.00 of our \$75,000.00 goal for the 2016–2017 school year! We close out this year in June. We would be honored if you would help us reach our goal through any tax-deductible donation amount. [You can use the enclosed envelope, or give online at \[deercreek.org/giving/\]\(https://deercreek.org/giving/\).](#)

If you have any questions about Deer Creek’s mission and how to participate in it, please contact me:

- 708-672-6200
- sblom@dccsonline.org

Thank you for surrounding us and helping us grow! 