



DEER CREEK

PRIDE

Winter/Spring 2018

Mission

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

Will you help us as we learn?
www.deercreek.org/giving



DEER CREEK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Preschool–8th grade
330 W. Highland Drive
Chicago Heights, IL 60411
www.deercreek.org
708-672-6200

 [facebook.com/DeerCreekChristianSchool](https://www.facebook.com/DeerCreekChristianSchool)

PRINCIPAL'S POST

LEARNING TO LISTEN

by Brian Verwolf,
Head of School

Good listening asks questions. Good listening gives honest feedback. Good listening silences the smartphone and doesn't stop the story, but is attentive and patient.

Good listening is an act of love.

Did you know that humans speak at an average rate of about 250 words per minute? And we cognitively process speech at more than triple this rate! There is listening, then there's being heard, being understood, and being known.

Most of us don't listen very well. Or if we do manage to listen, we are often just waiting until the other person finishes so that we can say what is on *our* mind—and that's not really listening.

Over time the result of this is that we seal ourselves off from other people, we don't really know them, or really understand their concerns. Our ability to listen impacts relationship.

And how can we listen well through all of this noise? We're busy people.

Many of us lead busy lives, and personal time with God can be difficult to find.

Good listening goes hand

in hand with the mindset of Christ. It flows from a humble heart that counts others more significant than ourselves. It looks not only to its own interests, but also to the interests of others (Philippians 2:4).

At the center of authentic, Christ-centered education is a world-class listener; a Father who loves deeply and knows our every need. Our Maker, who knows us and longs for fellowship with Him and His people.

Before you flip the page, I challenge you to join me in making sure that we find quality time to be with God—to be quiet and listen.

Dear Lord, may we learn to listen as an act of love. 



THE EXCELLENT TEACHER HAS EARS TO HEAR

by Mr. Gerald Blackmon,
Middle School
Science and Math



In the educational field, a teacher is encouraged to receive professional development in many areas, including classroom management, differentiated instruction, grading tactics, emergency procedures, working with challenging students, and more. Hours upon hours are spent on teaching strategies.

But one area of training rarely offered to teachers is how to be an effective listener. Better listening will help solve many of the problems that teachers regularly face. Through effective

listening, teachers can learn more from students, build positive relationships with parents, and strengthen the staff at the school.

The excellent teacher understands the importance of listening to **students**. "Students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Caring breeds connection. In order to connect with students, the excellent teacher must go beyond the curriculum.

The excellent teacher is one who provides students with a listening ear

to share feelings, dreams, concerns, life experiences, and more. From these conversations teachers learn student strengths, weaknesses, interests,

and personalities. Really knowing a student helps the teacher correctly identify learning styles, plan engaging lessons, and develop more accurate assessments. This is essential to student growth.

In the bible, there are at least three encounters that Jesus had with parents. Although each situation was different, they all had one thing in common. In each scenario, Jesus took the time to listen to the parents as they shared their concerns and information about their child. Jesus was the greatest teacher. When teachers are listening to **parents**, they are building trust as they demonstrate care and concern for their child. Thus, listening to parents is also essential to education.

The excellent teacher is one who humbly listens to **colleagues**. One strength in any good school is the ability of the staff to work collaboratively. Listening to colleagues becomes a professional skill that yields a fruitful harvest. When the excellent teacher listens, he is able to learn best practices to implement in the classroom. Listeners are able to provide support to other teachers in challenging areas. Mentoring relationships are built on the





Adam: I think it's about how other people hear you and how people may interpret what you say differently than what you meant. This leads to arguments.



Hannah: I enjoyed leading the groups. It was nerve-wracking, but it was a great experience being able to talk with others about race and issues they've encountered. You had to listen carefully to what other people were saying.



Audrey: Sometimes it's not what you already know; it's about what you need to learn.



Jordan: When you actually listen to the person, you understand what is going on. You can't judge them just by what they do. You have to get to know them.

DIVERSITY DAY

DEER CREEK STUDENTS LEAD, LISTEN, LEARN

On November 16, 2017, Deer Creek's Middle School students joined 200 friends from four other Chicago-area Christian schools for Diversity Day on the campus of Trinity Christian College. Four Deer Creek students served on the leadership team. Adam, Hannah, Audrey, and Jordan share their experience:

What is Diversity Day?

Hannah: It is a day where students from different schools meet-up to discuss the different things that are happening in our society.

Audrey: We talked about our diversity and our similarities.

Jordan: We asked questions, and then we were in smaller groups to talk about it.

Adam: It was a way for us to get together with people of different cultures to discuss how we feel around

each other.

What were some of the topics discussed?

Hannah: How would you feel being in a neighborhood you haven't been in that you're not familiar with, where the people look different than you? We talked about how we profile people every day and we don't even realize it.

Adam: We discussed if we would we act differently around other races than our own.

What does Diversity Day have to do with listening?

Hannah: You had to listen carefully to what other people were saying.

Audrey: Sometimes you hear things only from your own ethnicity, but you don't hear from another side.

Jordan: There was a girl in my group who was Polish, Caucasian, and African-American. She said

people often made fun of her because they didn't believe she was African-American because of her skin tone. This made me think of her differently, how she had to deal with that.

Audrey: We met an African-American girl whose parents were both police officers. She felt she was judged because people feel a way about what they do.

Adam: I think it's about how other people hear you and how people may interpret what you say differently than what you meant. This leads to arguments. Do we really listen to each other?

Jordan: When you actually listen to the person, you understand what is going on. You can't judge them just by what they do. You have to get to know them.

What were the most important take-aways?

Audrey: Sometimes it's

not what you already know; it's about what you need to learn. Don't act like you know everything, but be more compelled to learn about other things.

Adam: I realized that we are not that different. All of us there could relate to what each person said.

Hannah: I enjoyed leading the groups. It was nerve-wracking, but it was a great experience being able to talk with others about race and issues they've encountered.

Jordan: I enjoyed listening to people's thoughts and what they thought about culture. In my group we talked a lot about religion and what people thought.

Adam: Being leaders, I think we learned just as much as any other student there. It's important for leaders to learn. There is a difference between a leader and a boss. 💙



DEER CREEK CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

330 W. Highland Drive • Chicago Heights, IL 60411

US POSTAGE
PAID
DEER CREEK
CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL



We love learning!
(Thank you for supporting us.)
www.deercreek.org/giving



Find us at facebook.com/DeerCreekChristianSchool

ALUMNI, ILLUMINATED

SEEING JESUS' LOVE

My name is Georges LaBranche, and I am currently enrolled as an undergrad student at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama, where I am pursuing my BA in Ministerial Theology. After graduation

I would like to pursue my goal of attaining my Masters degree then Doctor of Divinity Degree.

It will always be a passion of mine to spread the love of Jesus Christ to the four corners of the world. I will

give credit where it is due and say Deer Creek helped me in seeing Jesus' love.

My time at Deer Creek is unmatched. The love and care I received from my teachers and friends made my childhood one that I will always smile upon. I remember all the school plays, the Timothy Awards of kindness, Operation Christmas Child—I still remember the jingle that used to play at chapel, and who could forget the famous Chicago Aurelio's Pizza for lunch? These memories bring me joy.

I recall an episode of Family Matters—the main character, Steve Urkel, had trouble climbing the rope in gym class; at Deer Creek



we had chin-ups. I unfortunately had no upper body strength, but there was no teasing or mocking; rather encouraging words and affirmation.

I encourage students and staff now to continue to spread the love that I experienced at Deer Creek—because love makes the world a better place. ❤️

Continued from page 2

ability to listen by both the mentor and the mentee. In addition, listeners are able to stand unified with other teachers because of common beliefs. Listening therefore becomes a source of intellectual support. Teachers learn by listening and helping each other.

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”

(James 1:19) This Scripture holds valuable meaning for the Christian educator. In order to connect with students, parents, and peers, the excellent teacher must carry out James 1:19. Being a good listener will provide educational encounters with students, parents, and staff members that will be life changing. It is a skill that no true teacher can live without and a vital tool in the Christian education toolbox. ❤️