



Dear New Families,

Congratulations on your invitation to join the Derryfield community.

We began our Derryfield journey in the Spring of 2017 when we enrolled our daughter, Ellie, as an incoming ninth grader. She and her younger brother, John, had grown up in a small, close-knit private school, and Ellie was ready for a bigger sky in which to spread her wings. As parents, we also wanted a group of committed, caring teachers and administrators who would know our children as people while providing a rich, varied learning environment. So here we are, seven years later: Ellie is nearing the completion of her junior year at George Washington University, and John is a sophomore at Derryfield.

When we first began attending family meetings at Derryfield, we heard from teachers, coaches, and administrators about the opportunities available for our children and how the school would support their growth and college preparation. Along the way, we also began to hear from parents and students about how Derryfield manages to meet different children where they are and find ways to customize their experience, stretch their capabilities, and expose them to opportunities that draw them out of their comfort zones. These experiences elevate Derryfield from a school that offers a great education to a school that provides an exceptional growth experience.

Before coming to Derryfield, Ellie was a good student, a dedicated dancer, and a budding leader in her small middle school. As a new ninth grader at Derryfield, she faced the challenge of meeting demanding academics, building a new friend group, and figuring out how to pursue her leadership interests. By the time she finished her senior year, she had become a highly motivated and effective student. She worked closely with administrators and teachers to help lead the school as Student Body President during COVID-19. She played varsity sports despite never having worn a number on her shirt before Derryfield. Derryfield provided the scaffolding required for her to build the skills, courage, and commitment to stretch herself and succeed. She also made relationships with adults and peers that will last a lifetime.

Derryfield also exceeded our expectations in preparing Ellie for college. She was accepted at many top-choice universities and offered generous scholarships. Ellie now thrives at college, double majoring in Public Policy and Business. She has made the



Dean's List each semester at GW, proving that Derryfield prepared her for a challenging course load. She successfully navigates her academic goals and is building lifelong friendships with other students who share her personal beliefs and passion for equality and social justice. During her time in college, Ellie has completed two internships on Capitol Hill with Senator Jeanne Shaheen and will be joining American Express as a Government Affairs intern this summer. Derryfield taught Ellie to lead, stand up for her beliefs, and advocate for herself. The leadership at Derryfield refers to this as teaching a child to “sail their own ship.”

When John was in fifth grade, we debated whether to send him to Derryfield or wait until he was older. Another Derryfield family encouraged us to move John as early as possible to give him every academic opportunity Derryfield had to offer. They told us it would help John in the long run. We are so happy we made that decision. Derryfield has provided John with the academic support to be successful and the athletic opportunities that he loves. Not all schools offer the level of academic support and executive functioning skills that Derryfield does. It has proven to be invaluable to John. John often tells us that it is cool to be smart at Derryfield. John is proud to be on the varsity soccer and ski teams and is looking forward to trying a new sport in the spring. He has forged incredible friendships, and the boys love hanging out together and taking turns hosting sleepovers before their ski races. Whether your child's passion is athletics, the arts, community service, leadership, or clubs, Derryfield will work with you to support your family and find your student's path to success.

The diversity of academic, athletic, and personal growth opportunities at a school of Derryfield's size is remarkable. Even after seven years, it sometimes seems like we have only experienced a small part of what Derryfield offers. Derryfield will provide your child with more than just an education. It will offer your whole family a place in a thriving community. You will have the opportunity to actively participate with your child, enjoying new experiences and people. If you have younger children, as we did, they will also find Derryfield an exciting and magnetic place.

Again, we congratulate your entire family on beginning this exciting adventure!

Best wishes,
The Small Family