



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. Here we are, five years later: Ellie is nearing the completion of her first year of college, and John is preparing to transition from middle school to grade nine.

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 them in their growth and preparation for college. 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 offers 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 played varsity sports despite never having worn a number on her shirt before Derryfield, and she worked closely with administrators and teachers to help lead the school as Student Body President. Derryfield provided the scaffolding required for her to build the skills, courage, and commitment to stretch herself and to succeed. She also made relationships, with adults and peers alike, that will last a lifetime. Just this week she has been emailing with a past history teacher who has agreed to help her complete a college-level project.

The diversity of academic, athletic, and personal growth opportunities at a school of Derryfield's size is remarkable. Even after five years, it sometimes seems like we have only experienced a small part of what Derryfield offers. *Understand that 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 along 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.



Ellie is thriving at college;. 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. Derryfield taught Ellie to lead, to stand up for what she believes in, and to 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. John has continued to improve his academic ability and to gain confidence. As he prepares to move from eighth grade to high school, we look forward to seeing where *his* ship sails and watching John thrive in the outstanding athletic program that Derryfield offers. 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 the specific path of success for your student.

Again, we offer our congratulations to your entire family on the beginning of this exciting adventure!

Best wishes,  
The Small Family