

# The Deerfield Scroll

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## Mr. Bicknell Becoming Head of School at The Dublin School

**KATIE KIM**  
*Associate Editor*

Deerfield Academy’s current Dean of Students Samuel Bicknell has been appointed as the new Head of School at The Dublin School in Dublin, New Hampshire. Mr. Bicknell will succeed Mr. Bradford Bates, who has served a 17-year tenure at The Dublin School, in the 2026-2027 academic year.

As Dean of StudentsOver his fifteen years at Deerfield, Mr. Bicknell has helped oversee student welfare, behavior management, and non-academic student life at the Academy. He has also served as Director of Sustainability, Director of Student Activities, Residential Head, Spanish teacher, coach, and advisor. “[Deerfield] has been home for over 15 years, and when I arrived, I was a single guy only a couple of years out of college, and now I’m with Ms. Bicknell and [have] three3 kids,” Mr. Bicknell said.

Mr. Bicknell learned about the Head of School position in May through Resource Group 175 (RG175), a search firm that specializes in Head of School and school leadership positions. After going through a few stages of the application process,

he was selected for a three-day finalist interview in early October. The Dublin School Board of Trustees stated, “[Mr. Bicknell] stood out among an incredibly strong pool of applicants for his collaborative leadership, vision, and deep alignment with Dublin’s mission and motto: ‘Truth and Courage.’”

Although he knew the hardest part of the process would be grappling with the possibility of leaving the Deerfield DA community, Mr. Bicknell and Ms. Bicknell felt like it was the right time for a new change. When they first visited Dublin, they “could feel the warmth and kindness from everyone, and [they] were blown away by the beauty of the campus.” Mr. Bicknell especially liked that the school had over 500 acres of outdoor education opportunities, which he knew would cultivate a culture of intellectual curiosity and belonging among the students. “It is a smaller school of about 170 students, and that was very appealing as well, because it means I will be able to build strong relationships with every community member,” Mr. Bicknell said.

*Continued on News, p. 2*



GWYNETH HOCHHAUSLER/DEERFIELD SCROLL

## Trip to the MET

**AARON HAN**  
*Associate Editor*

On October 26th, Deerfield students from the Art History class traveled from Deerfield to New York City to visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met). The Sunday trip , which took the majority of the day, brought the class members face-to-face with artwork and culture that they had been studying.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art traces its roots back to a group of four Americans in 1866 France, who endeavored to create a “national institution and gallery of art.” The men took action upon their return to the United States, where they rallied philanthropists, businessmen, collectors, and artists to push for the creation of the museum, which was formally incorporated on April 13, 1870. In the following decades, the Met underwent several structural expansions,

as well as art acquisitions, including works from artists like Edouard Manet, Anthony van Dyck, and Henri Matisse. At the start of the 20th Century, the Met had solidified its reputation as, according to the Evening Post, “One of the finest [museums] in the world.”

Currently, the Met spans over two million square feet in area, and contains “more than 1.5 million works of art spanning 5,000 years of culture around the globe.” The museum continues to reorganize and expand its collection to this day, with the Arab, Turkish, and Iranian galleries opening on 2011, as well as the reopening of New American Wing on 2012.

*Continued on Arts, p. 9*

## Choate Spirit Week Themes

**CECE SALYER & SOFIA GOVI**  
*Staff Writers*

Deerfield’s rivalry with Choate Rosemary Hall has fueled the Academy’s school spirit for over a century. Choate Week, the week leading up to the highly anticipated Choate Day, always brings Deerfield’s campus together, unifying the student body’s competitive spirit.

During Choate Week, Deerfield students are encouraged to dress up in respective themes to support the campus morale. Every day of the

Week has its own theme, and students go all out with their outfits that fill campus with anticipation for Choate Day. Choate Week’s themes have been established for many years and this year’s themes were mostly the same, with only one change made. Jarron Crosbie ’26, this year’s captain Deerfield, explained, “A lot of the themes are themes that have been happening for the past couple years.” He added, “I have a little book that ... has a lot of the same themes ... that were used in 2019. It’s kind of like a thing that we reuse a lot.”

Monday kicked off the week with

the theme of rhyme without reason, a returning favorite that allows students to pair up and dress as two unrelated things that rhyme with each other. An example of one rhyme is lobster and boxer, which was used by cheerleader Ellora Devitre ’26 and Cecelia Cramer ’26.

*Continued on Sports, p. 11*



THIJS WITTINK DEERFIELD ACADEMY

## Co-education at Deerfield Academy: Voices from 1989 to 2025

**CHELSEA SHEN**  
*Associate Editor*

Deerfield Academy admitted both boys and girls when it was founded in 1797 up until 1948 when Frank Boyden was the headmaster. It was a single-sex institution until 1989, when the Board of Trustees voted to return to co-education by admitting an equal number of boys and girls. Over the thirty-six years that Deerfield has been co-educational, what it means to be a “Deerfield girl” thirty years ago is not the same as it is today.

President of the Board of Trustees Leila Govi ’93, a member of the first co-educational class at Deerfield, described the school as having “125 girls that were spread across five years. The ratio of girls to boys was 1:5. By the time I was a senior, it kind of evened

out. It was close to 50-50.”

As the first female students in an all-boys school, Ms. Govi explained that “to make the decision to come to Deerfield [as a girl], you had to be a bit of a daredevil.” However, both Ms. Govi and Amy Snow ’92 recounted a relatively smooth transition. “I don’t remember feeling any pushback or negativity. The boys in my class had entered Deerfield expecting girls coming in,” Ms. Snow said.

Ms. Govi said, “I feel like they also rolled out the red carpet for us in terms of anything we need, any advisor support,” adding, “theythey were very attentive to making sure that girls were going to have a good experience.” Associate Head of School for Student Life Amie Creagh exclaimed that she could remember the flowers in the [Deerfield] locker rooms when

Phillips Academy Andover played a game against Deerfield in 1990.

The “red carpet” for girls in the early years of co-education also extended to dorms. Ms. Govi reminisced on her sophomore move-in day when they opened the Rosendwald-Shumway dormitory, saying, “When I moved into that dorm sophomore year, one of my brothers said ‘this is outrageous’ and that it was like a Four Seasons hotel.”

However, Ms. Creagh talked about how “there were some spaces on campus that were kind of ‘boy space’ either implicitly or explicitly” when she arrived in 1999. “I’m thinking specifically of the old rink and where girls stood and where boys stood in watching hockey games.”

*Continued on Features, p. 4*

*News, p. 3*

### Deerfield Promotional Video for the MET

Tim Wang ’27 covers Deerfield’s promotional video for an upcoming fundraising campaign that will be displayed at the MET.

*Features, p. 5*

### History of KFC

Jack LaRovere Adams ’28 and Lucia Kinder ’28 spotlight the history of Koch Friday Night Concert after running for the past 25 years. .

*Arts, p. 6*

### Hand Paintings

Stella Hu ’28 highlights the Post-AP Studio Art class’ Hand Paintings project where students learned how to express complex themes through the depiction of a human hand.

*Sports, p. 11*

### Captain Spotlights

Celine Chang ’28 features the reflections of sports captains at the end of their season.

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The Deerfield Scroll

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The Deerfield Scroll, established in 1925, is the official student newspaper of Deerfield Academy. The Scroll seeks to uphold the spirit and integrity of journalism, to serve as an accessible platform elevating student voices, and to show that every story and opinion, when written and rooted in compassion, is worth sharing with the Deerfield community. We strive to be a newspaper of the students, by the students and for the students. Signed letters to the editor that express legitimate opinions are welcomed. We hold the right to edit for brevity. Opinion articles with names attached represent only the views of the respective writers. Opinion articles without names represent the consensus views of the editorial board.

Mr. Bicknell Becoming Head of School at The Dublin School

KATIE KIM  
Associate Editor

Continued from Front

Mr. Bicknell believes in The Dublin School’s mission and the way it supports students through their formative high school years. He shared that “Dublin’s commitment to helping young people know themselves and contribute meaningfully to the world resonates deeply with [him],” a sentiment that was evident during his visit to the school in early October. “I’m really energized by the idea of working closely with all constituents and balancing both the internal-facing and external-facing aspects of the role,” Mr. Bicknell added. Living, studying, and working in places such as New Zealand, Spain, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Argentina provided Mr. Bicknell with international perspectives on how to create an inclusive, student-centered education and how to mentor global citizenship. The Board of Trustees at Dublin shared how “[Mr. Bicknell’s] thoughtful approach to education and ability to build strong relationships across communities make him an ideal fit for Dublin’s next chapter.” Mr. Bicknell expressed gratitude for those whom he had learned from over the years at Deerfield, and he believes Associ-



ALBERT YUK/DEERFIELD ACADEMY

Inside the Prep for Prep Visit to Deerfield

CLAIRE XIA  
Associate Editor

On October 16, the Academy welcomed a group of Prep 9 students and their families to campus for a half-day of class visits, campus tours, and conversation. The few dozen seventh graders were recognized and welcomed at sit-down lunch. While this visit happens routinely, Deerfield’s partnership with Prep 9 represents more than three decades of widening access to independent school education. Prep 9, founded in 1978 as an outgrowth of Columbia University’s Teachers College, is part of the larger Prep for Prep network, which, according to Prep 9’s website, identifies “high-achieving, motivated students from New York City...[to] prepare [them] for success at top independent boarding schools in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.” Their program “equips students to develop as leaders, pursue their passions, and make a lasting impact in school and beyond.” According to Deerfield’s Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Chip Davis, the Academy has been connected with Prep 9 for roughly 35 years. He also mentioned that the program began as an academic enrichment program, saying, “I don’t think that it was founded with a boarding idea in mind.” Now, however, Prep 9 has evolved into a program that includes students who are interested in boarding schools like Deerfield. The program mainly aims to provide access and exposure to under-resourced students. Mr.

Davis emphasized that “not all the kids that were here will end up applying here,” explaining that prospective students often come from “modest income backgrounds and would not have the knowledge of schools like Deerfield” without the opportunities that Prep 9 provides. Deerfield hosted visiting students and their parents for a half-day of activities. Mr. Davis described a typical visit: “We’ve given them and the parents access to one class...they went to sit-down lunch, and then the parents were hosted by mem-

bers of the admission office.” The day also included a student panel. “We had a little panel of current DA students, some of whom were Prep 9 kids, and they were just sharing about their Deerfield experience and answering questions,” Mr. Davis said. This part of the visit allowed Prep 9 students to hear firsthand how attending a school like Deerfield can impact students from backgrounds similar to their own. Reagan Deery ’28 hosted five Prep 9 students and echoed Mr.

Davis’ sentiment: “It was really great getting to know the kids. I think the program is very helpful in the sense that it helps kids get the opportunity to do something they wouldn’t normally be able to do: being able to see the school and get the opportunity to see what life at boarding school is like. They got to come eat lunch with us and just immerse themselves in the experience of Deerfield.” She added how she especially enjoyed her time with the students while touring the Athletic Center,

noting that “when we went to the basketball gym...one of them was draining threes.” Not only does the connection between Prep 9 and Deerfield provide unique experiences for visiting students, but also encourages unlikely interactions that mutually benefit Deerfield and Prep students alike. Deerfield is one of about a dozen schools that Prep 9 is connected with, and Mr. Davis stressed the role Prep 9 plays in providing a structured, intentional path for students to explore selective boarding schools. “Their founding principle was academic enrichment, kind of giving kids a little more access to quality education. It’s not about boarding schools, just more about giving them a better path,” he said. The relationship between Deerfield and Prep 9 reflects the Academy’s broader commitment to expanding academic opportunity. “We see some...kids who are boarding-school-interested,” Mr. Davis noted. By offering visits, class experiences, and exposure to current Deerfield students of similar backgrounds, the Academy provides insight into campus life and academic expectations, helping students make informed choices about their educational futures. Prep 9’s connection to Deerfield has endured for decades because of its alignment with both the Academy and the program’s missions: offering academically promising students access to top-tier education while enriching Deerfield’s student body with diverse experiences. As Mr. Davis concluded, “it’s all about providing access.”



COURTESY OF PREP FOR PREP



# Dr. Garret Nelson Speaks on Geography and Community

**MAX PANG**  
Associate Editor

On October 30 after sit-down dinner, President and Head Curator of the Boston Public Library Leventhal Map & Education Center Garrett Nelson gave a talk focusing on the connections between physical geography and community. The talk, titled “The Here In Togetherness: Place, Territory and the Challenge of Common Ground,” sought to bring the conversation over geography and physical location back into Deerfield’s limelight, focusing on spatial analysis, how we construct community, and how our concept of it has changed over time.

Nelson opened his talk by examining the pre-modern world and its relatively static boundaries—a world where “the boundaries of the community are the boundaries of the government, are the boundaries of the economy, are the boundaries of the environment,” according to History Teacher and Department Chair Brian Hamilton, who organized the event. Covering a wide-range of topics, places, and times, Nelson anchored his talk in several critical questions: “How do we decide on boundaries, and who and what are we excluding?”, “How do we balance diversity and conformity when community-building?” and, referring back to his opening thoughts, “What comes next for present communities who no longer have the intimacy and constraints of the pre-modern ‘village-style’ community?”

Aside from these questions, Nelson introduced three schools of thought—three methods people have used in the modern era to form communities. Mr. Hamilton described the first method, which involved “returning from the stressful, broadening modern world [and] returning to small, insular communities.” Mr. Hamilton said that “Historic Deerfield was an example of that,” explaining that “people in a Cold War context, when they imagined what made America great, [imagined] communities like Deerfield, small towns that had a sense of shared government and shared purpose.”

The other two methods directly clash with each other. Nelson juxtaposed the rising idea of a global community, having things on a worldwide scale, embodied in our own Center of Community Service and Global Citizenship, with an exclusionary reaction to that where “people anxiously build higher and higher walls between communities.”

Nelson then substantiated these questions with multiple case studies. For example, he talked about how multiple countries from both the communist Warsaw Pact and Western-aligned NATO came together to manage transportation and commerce on the Danube River as an example of finding common ground. In another example, Nelson used Frederick Law Olmsted’s journey of bringing public national parks to America and designing Central Park to introduce bigger ideas of constructing a community

and what sharing spaces looks like in a democracy, where anyone, rich or poor, can use the park together.

Associate Editor for the *Scroll* Nicholas Xu ’27 found the unique combination of subject matter and expertise exciting. “[Geography is] pretty much treated as an aspect of history courses ... and to have someone who specialized in that field come and share some of his ideas was intriguing.” He also believed that the evidence and the talk itself were meaningful: “I think a lot

of the examples he gave were niche examples ... everyone could have gone to the talk and taken something away from it.” Similarly, Mr. Hamilton found the subject matter of the talk stimulating: “I’ve admired Nelson’s work for a long time, and I find it inspiring the way that planners and other thinkers have wrestled with these questions and come to very different conclusions.”

While the talk wasn’t specifically tailored to Deerfield specifically, Nelson still managed to use His-

torical Deerfield as an example in his talk. Mr. Hamilton shared that Nelson “was struck by the many markers of community and the community-building practices that we employ even in his short time here.” Perpetuating these practices to create a purposeful community and a strong sense of togetherness is key to keeping inspiring those in and out of campus.



COURTESY OF DEERFIELD COMMUNICATIONS

# Deerfield Produces Promotional Video for the MET

**TIM WANG**  
Associate Editor

From October 14 to 16 of this year, Deerfield Academy partnered with LoneSpruce, a videography and creative studio, to produce a promotional video for the Academy’s upcoming 2026 fundraising campaign. Director of Communications Jess Day described the initiative as a “comprehensive campaign,” explaining that it will raise money for many projects, including the dining hall construction, financial aid, faculty support, and a new dormitory. She noted that comprehensive campaigns run parallel with annual fundraising events, such as the Deerfield Fund. Currently, the Academy has set a goal of raising \$425 million through this upcoming campaign, which will run for four to five years.

The Academy has been in a “quiet phase,” a period before the campaign’s public announcement. The campaign is scheduled to officially begin on May 13, 2026, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The video will be displayed during a formal event for the Deerfield community, where parents, alumni, select faculty, and students will gather to share their experiences, celebrating the school’s many facets. Ms. Day emphasized that the purpose of the video is to “highlight all the things that we’re raising the money for... and the things that are important [to Deerfield], like the meaningful traditions, and everything else that makes Deerfield great.”

The filmmaking process began

this past spring, when the LoneSpruce crew captured footage of athletic games, classroom discussions, and everyday campus life between May 13 and 14. This fall, the crew returned to capture more footage, much of which included faculty and student participation in discussions. Ms. Day explained that, since the primary audience is alumni, the Academy “wanted to highlight teachers who are well-known,” such as Science Teacher Heidi Valk, who has taught at Deerfield for almost 30 years. Ms. Day added that the crew also selected History Teacher Hayden Fox’s classroom to illustrate the humanities at Deerfield, offering insight into the school’s academic environment.

Beyond showcasing its classroom experiences, the Academy hopes to capture the most authentic version of campus life, something Ms. Day said was “tough to do.” To accomplish this, the crew has spent time “capturing the beauty of the place...filming everything as you would for a movie,” Ms. Day said. “We want to show as much as we can...to show all the aspects of Deerfield, like humanities, sciences, arts, and athletics.”

Students also had the opportunity to partake in multiple scenes, contributing to the film’s depiction of an authentic school environment. Associate Editor for the *Scroll* Rory Hartblay ’26 participated in a scene where he and two other students had a discussion with Head of School John Austin in the library. Hartblay explained that the reading room on the first floor had been set up to look like a mock class. During the filmmaking process, “[the film

crew] told us to have an actual conversation with Dr. Austin, but make it random because they weren’t actually going to take the sound from the recording,” Hartblay said. He explained that as a result, “Dr. Austin decided to have each of us make a meal for him.”

Nate Ugwonali ’27 also participated in the filming of the mock classroom with Dr. Austin. “The filming of the promotional video was fun,” Ugwonali said. “I got to talk to Dr. Austin about his favorite foods and books, and it was especially cool seeing [the] behind the scenes of a production like this.”

Another student who was featured in the same scene, Tashvi Reddy ’27, shared her perspective on the filming experience, stating, “The film crew asked us multiple times to either take down notes, to lean in or out of the camera, and even asked Dr. Austin to say something that makes everyone laugh.” Reddy recalled that her participation was unplanned and that she happened to be studying in the library when the filming began, and she described the experience as “unexpected but incredibly fun.”

Hartblay described the filmmaking process as being very professional, saying, “I was kind of shocked because I didn’t know that it was going to be a professional film crew. I thought it was just going to be like another film promo that Deerfield does like with the communications office, like the ones you see on Instagram every other day.”

The film crew also captured footage of students at the rock to display more facets of the Acad-

emy’s culture. Luc Ruminski ’27 was part of this process, and he described the experience, saying, “It was really fun getting to work with the crew, since I got to meet a bunch of new people during filming. I was happy to represent Deerfield and be part of the filmmaking process.”

The film crew will return to campus in January of 2026 to capture scenes of a sit-down meal after the renovations of the new dining hall are complete. Ms. Day shared

the possibility of an on-campus premiere once filmmaking wraps up.

She further expressed her excitement to witness the completion of the production and the opportunity to participate in the filming process. “[The video] is supposed to be inspirational. It’s supposed to get people excited to participate in the campaign...and I think it’s a privilege to share things about Deerfield.”



COURTESY OF DEERFIELD COMMUNICATIONS



# Co-education at Deerfield Academy: Voices from 1989 to 2025

**CHELSEA SHEN**  
Associate Editor

*Continued from Front*

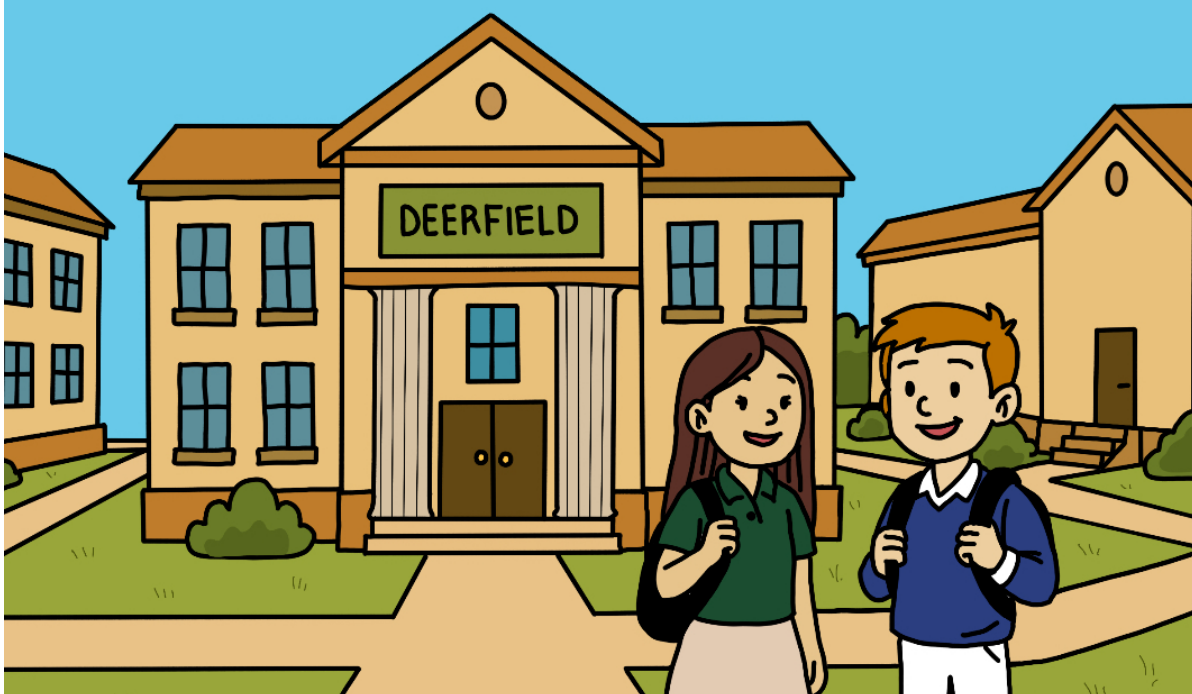
In the fitness center then, Ms. Creagh said, there were rarely girls. “Now if you go to the fitness center in the mornings there are a lot of girls in there lifting weights,” she said. Although the gender ratio in the gym has leveled out, Eva Bramwell ’26 described how even today, “girls’ [sports] don’t get the same crowd that guys do. Girls field hockey will never have the same crowd as football.” Even though the sports crowds may vary in size, Ms. Govi had the feeling as one of the first girls of Deerfield, “you could play anything, you could join anything.” The social dynamics between girls and boys at Deerfield have evolved over the decades. “The boys must’ve been given a talking to. They were very careful about opening the doors for us,” Ms. Govi said, humorously recounting how the boys would wait for her to choose a seat in class. On the other hand, Bramwell shared a different experience than that of the 1990s. She explained that “when a girl gets on stage to dance, to sing, or

to get an award, the guys will immediately say the guy that she’s associated with.” She added, “I think that’s so disrespectful because she just won an award, and you’re just taking her achievement and putting it on the guy that she’s with.” In the classroom, Bramwell recounted how her history teacher tracked the gender distribution of discussion, and 76% of the conversation was controlled by male students, even in a class with more girls than boys. At the same time, though, Sophie Simonds ’26 explained, “If I compare my friends here to my friends at home, people here are just much more comfortable and much more themselves around people of the opposite sex.” Deerfield’s female community has a reputation among other schools as an “an unkind girl culture,” according to Ms. Creagh. Bramwell echoed this sentiment, describing how she once heard a senior boy say, “You should definitely send your son to Deerfield, but I don’t think that you should send your daughter.” Simonds explained how “the toxic girl behavior is prevalent as underclassmen, but as [she] progresses through Deerfield, particular-

ly in [her] senior year, the girls have gotten nicer.” As an upperclassmen, she began to feel a stronger culture of community. Ms. Snow affirmed the positive female culture, saying that in her time at Deerfield girls were supportive of each other. “Our class especially had a really good spirit and was very cohesive,” she said, adding, “Now when I go back

for reunions it feels like you’d fall right back in the friendships you had when you were there.” Ms. Creagh said that she would describe the culture as “supportive, [with] older girls mentoring younger girls either explicitly or implicitly ... I would also describe girls on this campus as powerful and culture builders.” Since its first co-educational

class in 1989, what it means to be a girl at Deerfield evolved. No two girls will have the same experience at Deerfield, but every Deerfield girl in the past decades will have left a mark on the 36 years of co-educational history. Describing the girls of the class of 1993, Ms. Govi said, “We were so much more than [just] the first girls. You were going to pave the way, whatever the way was going to be.”



KAYLEEN CHO/DEERFIELD SCROLL

## “Once a Scholar, Always a Scholar”: The Rising Scholars Program

**JULIET LOPEZ & NAOMI KIM**  
Staff Writers

In 2012, former Math Teacher Darnel Barnes and current Math Teacher Sheryl Koyama took a group of Deerfield seniors out to dinner. The math teachers had been observing for years how these different students adapted to Deerfield. During this dinner, they posed a question: What could we have done better? The students proposed a pre-orientation program for Deerfield, and that idea has since become the Rising Scholars Program, colloquially known as RSP. Initially established to help students from diverse backgrounds grow accustomed to the academic rigour of boarding schools, RSP has since become a program aimed at helping students navigate both the social and academic landscapes of Deerfield. “RSP gave me leverage above other students who came later ... I was able to know the campus more than other students who just arrived,” said Precious Ewuzie ’28, an RSP alumna and proctor for the summer of 2025. All new 9th and 10th grade students receive an email inviting them to apply for the program, and about 36 students get accepted each year. RSP is specifically focused on serving students with limited experience in a boarding school environment. Ms. Koyama, the former director of RSP, believes it is important to point out what RSP is not: “It’s not academic recovery. It’s not a program for students on financial aid. It’s not a program for students of color. It’s a program for kids for whom the transition to Deerfield might be a pretty big change,” she said. Head Proctor Tashvi Reddy ’27 said, in her view, that “the purpose of RSP is to bring students not accustomed to the boarding

school ... way of life here, to help them dip their toes into the water.” She added that the most important part of the program is to make the scholars “feel at home.” During the program, students attend core classes such as science, history, and English to get used to the feeling of discussion-based learning. They have study hall, sit-down meals, and also must turn in their phones for the night. RSP also includes icebreaker sessions, a campus-wide scavenger hunt to locate and remember the people and places of Deerfield, a day for community service exploring the local area around Deerfield, and bonding activities such as games and movies. RSP student proctors are chosen in the spring through an application process and head pro-

tors are chosen by Director of Academic Support Jaclyn DeLuca. “What we’re looking for when we select scholars again is a wide range of students’ experiences and backgrounds ... we want to have a diverse cohort,” Ms. DeLuca said. She also highlighted the importance of the nature of proctoring as a leadership role: “It’s a great opportunity for students who maybe don’t have other leadership opportunities on campus.” Reflecting on her proctoring experience, Ewuzie ’28 said, “I felt like I was like a role model to the students.” Head Proctor Eddie Andrews ’27 said that RSP allowed him to get to know a lot of underclassmen he wouldn’t have known without the program. “I would recommend everyone to apply to be a proctor, whether you did it or not

... It definitely changed my outlook on boarding school,” he said. Ms. DeLuca spoke about how some students had expressed that during RSP, they felt part of a tight-knit, supportive community, which they lost when school actually started. Students who had grown close together in the small group were again thrust into a sea of new faces without the guidance they had previously relied on. To try and remedy this, Ms. DeLuca is working on bringing the RSP cohort from this past August back together during Turkey Term to discuss ideas to further the program. “Ideas for the program mostly come from students themselves,” Ms. DeLuca said. Ms. Koyama also added that she had a vision for the program where

older scholars would become mentors for others in the program throughout the years. “Once a scholar, always a scholar,” she said. Both Ewuzie and Ms. Koyama emphasized the importance of the relationships made in RSP. “The relationships that they make with the other scholars, as well as with the proctors, have been the things that they said they’ve taken away the most,” Ms. Koyama said. Ewuzie agreed, adding, “A bunch of the friendships I have currently are because of RSP.” Ewuzie describes RSP as having a lasting impact on the way she views Deerfield. As she said, “The final moments of RSP have always stuck with me. I feel like at that moment I knew that I chose the right school for me.”



ALBERT YUK/DEERFIELD SCROLL



## Q&A Spotlight with Mr. Emerson

**PEGGY HUANG**  
*Associate Editor*

Q: Why did you choose to be a teacher, and who inspired you to do this profession?

A: Since my grandfather was a teacher, I certainly think that teaching was something that sort of seemed appealing to me. In graduate school, I grew less passionate about research and sort of stumbled upon boarding schools as an option where I could teach and coach, so that seemed like a nice fit. I'd say my department chair, John Ford, when I was working at Choate, was one of the most incredible teachers I've ever been around. During undergraduate school, my organic chemistry teacher was also an incredible mentor. I did some undergraduate research with him and he kind of pushed me to go to graduate school for organic chemistry. However, I knew I didn't want to be in a research lab after graduate school, and I think that's where I sort of gravitated to teaching. The area that I did well in college and school in general was science, so it was just something to continue and graduate school was the opportunity. I think somewhere in graduate school, that's when I realized I really want to be a teacher, or at least try it.

Q: What was one of your most memorable teaching memories?

I've told this story to my students before but during my second year evaluation at Choate, I was working with alkaline metals and water. I caught the bench and rug on fire as the mixture exploded and

my department chair, John Ford, sat beside me. So that's memorable.

Q: How do you incorporate the balance between hands-on learning and analysis-based learning?

For me, I think organic chemistry in college was super hard, but what made it great were the labs. What made the course more accessible to me was the visualization of the labs and how it taught me the textbook content. So the balance for me feels like, get in the labs, get your hands dirty. I think if a lab is done well, it can serve the same purpose as memorizing a chapter. In terms of analysis-based learning and prepping for the AP, while we could have focused entirely on just the chemistry and the content, I think there were a lot of other things to discover. For Honors Environmental Science, I try to incorporate field trips and labs because it's critical. Instead of focusing entirely on learning new content, I want to show them what they were learning. If we want to talk about how our sewage system works, we go to sewage treatment. It's nasty but we want to see it in action.

Q: What is the most important value or belief for you when it comes to approaching students? How do you apply that in your teaching?

A: I think what comes to mind is building trust among the students. It is essential to build a relationship in class between the students, amongst themselves and the teacher. It's particularly important to push yourselves in classes and build a sense of community. I think that's definitely prevalent at Deerfield, but if you

don't have that sense of community and trust within the class, I think it's hard for students to really take criticism and grow. I try to allow students to really get to know themselves as students, and hopefully that's something that can grow. As the year goes on, students grow to be instrumental in creating a warm and comfortable atmosphere in class where people had fun and wanted to learn. That's important. If I could be a facilitator in that, that's great.

Q: What is your goal for the students? How does this goal influence the way you teach them?

A: I think it's super important to embrace being a nerd. If you have no interest in science, but you are a talented and engaged student, you can find some really interesting tidbits in the class. Get your hands dirty, because that's the beauty. I mean in biology, until you've dissected a heart, you don't really know what a heart is, right? There are all sorts of things with chemistry and environmental science to see. I think it's important to understand that the buffet is out there, and you get to choose from that buffet any way you see fit. I try to build enough energy and interest in the material that even a kid who has no interest in science can look forward to going to that class. You guys are so talented in many ways. It's kind of silly, but I always remind myself to do no harm, not screw the student up, and make sure there's a lot of stuff for them to devour. There's a place in the classroom and field to really allow students to push themselves however they see fit, and I think that works particularly well.

## Student Life Office Works to Sustain Student Culture

**CAMPBELL ANYANWU**  
*Staff Writer*

From the top floor of the Main School Building, Associate Head of School for Student Life and Language Teacher Amie Creagh and Assistant Athletic Director and 10th Grade Class Dean Drew Philie answered the question, "What are the top three things stolen on campus?"

"Bikes, Scooters, Food," responded Mr. Philie. "Food, Scooters, Bikes," said Ms. Creagh, rearranging the order of the short list.

Stolen items on campus have been a longstanding issue, from unlabeled food to electric scooters suddenly going missing from charging ports. Many students have expressed their frustration with their belongings getting stolen on campus; in Layla Abdi '28's case, it was first her friend's bike then her own bike from the outskirts of Harold Smith.

"The first instance, I was using my friend's bike, and I've been using it for a couple days, but she didn't have a lock on it, so I parked it discreetly behind my building so that no one would take it," she explained. After finding out that the bike was stolen, she eventually found it broken outside of the Athletic Complex. "It's not that bad this year because Shipping got moved to the Chen so we have security cameras," said Mina Hata '29, "but it might still happen from time to time."

At the Academy, community remains a central part of the culture, Ms. Creagh and Mr. Philie described—but stealing disrupts

the core value of trust shared around campus. "I think that we have a pretty trusting community. I think if you look at this place in comparison to maybe other boarding schools and college campuses, this is a place where we know each other here," Mr. Philie said.

He added, "That said, I think we're seeing that less and less, right? And so, we make it a big point to talk about these things at our school meetings, and on a daily basis, which I think are good reminders for our students as we share the same space and we're part of something bigger than ourselves."

He brought up the point that Deerfield students are living in a shared environment, one that requires them to be conscious of their choices. As Ms. Creagh pointed out, "It's when you're thinking 'this thing' is more important to you than anybody else ... 'I'm putting myself above everyone else at this moment.'"

Today, she feels that the overall student culture overpowers instances of stealing. "Those rare moments of 'self-first' are kept at bay by the kids making thousands of decisions to create the culture we have now," she said, adding, "I hope a kid who steals something, recognizes that they are an outlier and that they feel somehow, like, 'Wait a minute, this thing I'm doing here is not helping me build the culture I want to live in.'"

The SLO members emphasized the importance of students not just living in the culture they want but actively contributing to its creation.

## Students and Faculty Continue 25 Years of Koch Friday Night Concert

**JACK LAROVERE ADAMS & LUCIA KINDER**  
*Staff Writer & Features Editor*

When he was 15 years old, former Art Teacher David Dickinson planned to become a professional musician. Instead, he and his wife, former French Teacher Claudia Lyons, ended up founding the Koch Friday Concert at the beginning of an almost four-decades-long career at the Academy.

Inspired by talk shows like David Letterman's, Mr. Dickinson and Ms. Lyons brought in Josh Binswanger '80, who worked in comedy at the time, to MC the event. The concert began as a once-a-year event but soon expanded into a twice-yearly tradition. Now, it's held every term.

After introducing the concert in 2004 and taking a brief sabbatical, Ms. Lyons and Mr. Dickinson came back to resume KFC three years later. "I had no clue there would be such a groundswell of interest from students," Mr. Dickinson said, adding, "I guess it got out there that everyone is supportive, and you don't have to be professional ... everyone was applauding [the] people who just gave it a try."

As Spanish Teacher and KFC organizer Cheri Karbon described, the couple truly dedicated themselves to the Deerfield community. "They married but never had kids, deciding the students of Deerfield would be their kids,"

she said. In addition to founding KFC, Ms. Lyons and Mr. Dickinson began the DeNunzio Disco.

Mr. Dickinson remembered that students would come into his apartment in Mather to practice their performances for him before the concert. At the time, KFC would start at 7:30 p.m. and often last until nearly midnight, and the class deans would extend curfew hours.

When the concert first started, the majority of performers were part of the Academy's music program. "We would get singers and musicians ... [but] little by little—this is the best thing about it—it started opening up. And little by little, the novices started showing up," Mr. Dickinson said. In 2010, he and Ms. Lyons chose a small group of the top KFC performers to perform at a New York City dinner for Deerfield trustees and donors.

Today, KFC enters its 25th year. Ms. Karbon, who came to the Academy in 1999, said the concert has stayed quite true to the original vision of Ms. Lyons and Mr. Dickinson. She and student co-hosts Will Wichern '27 and Reagan Warren '27 have experienced firsthand the challenge the event demands; Warren joked that each concert takes "five tons of manpower and three hours of coordination each week."

The organization of this year's concerts began last spring,

as Ms. Karbon and the student hosts slotted the three concerts for 2025-2026 into the calendar. Yet despite the hours of planning poured into the event, the concert is always a little bit different. The team has learned to predict last-minute act changes, tech malfunctions, and other unpredictable disasters. "There's just so

much that can go wrong—and so much that will," Warren admitted.

The organizers, and especially the student MCs up on stage have know how to handle all sorts of issues—Ms. Karbon described the process as "knowing something's going to not go as planned, counting on that. And then we have such a kind audience."

Now, the spirit behind the concert never fades, she said, and for her, this is one of the most special aspects. "Even if a group gets up and doesn't do very well, the community is still going to support them," she said. As Mr. Dickinson put it, KFC "never would have happened without students being willing to get up there and try, and that's what it was all about."



COURTESY OF DAVID DICKINSON



Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

My experience collaborating with Choate on our last issue was awful. Hopefully, you know what I’m talking about: it’s the one with the green borders that we scattered around campus on Choate Day.

To put it bluntly, Choate’s communication was awful. I felt like Choate’s EIC didn’t have the authority to decide their own article due dates, send-to-print, or distribution dates without communicating with us. This led to many conversations that got us nowhere and led to their advisor stepping in and disrupting our schedule last minute. Additionally, I felt backstabbed by their editorial board. For our eight-page collaborative issue, I agreed to allocate Choate four pages and Deerfield three if the front page could highlight the *Scroll’s* 100th anniversary. The front page I received from their layout team didn’t have a single word dedicated to our special year—I was told they forgot. Anyway, we redid the layout ourselves.

Not only was this issue the most tortuous one I’ve gone through at the helm of the *Scroll*, it was also a special issue that I envisioned, enticed by the prospect of bringing excitement to Choate Day and the *Scroll*. Thus, when I was going through difficulties trying to make this issue go through to print, I occasionally thought to myself: This isn’t part of my responsibilities as EIC. It’s giving me a headache. Why am I even doing this issue?

In November—the gloomiest month of the year according to Thriveworks, a mental health firm based in Amherst—it is easy to fall into this cyclical and depressive train of thought. As seasonal depression peaks and final projects and assessments overwhelm you in November, you might think to yourself: why am I even trying this hard in school? You might think your future is bleak. You might lose hope.

Please don’t. Think about the upcoming holiday season. Think about spending time with your friends and family, laughing around a dinner table. Or do something else that gives you mo-

tivation, gives you hope. Frankly, I don’t care what you do, but I hope that you’ll do something to ground yourself, put your struggles in perspective, realize they are small in the grand scheme of life and that you’ll get through them. Prioritize finding any source of meaning to what you are doing, and chase it.

In the case of the *Scroll*, I wished to see students and alumni and new readers appreciate us and this unique issue, to tell me that they were interested in what they saw and couldn’t wait for the next issue to be published. And seeing Michael, Tai, Jack, Maggie, Tucker, Declan, and Lalwani, amongst others, all reach out to me and compliment both the way our issue was laid out and the articles within, I would do this issue again, 100 times over.

Even if you are perfectly fine in November, things are going well for you, and you are excited for the upcoming holidays, reach out to your friends and family. Let them know you are there for them. Many times, those struggling silently are also going through the deepest shit, and you just being present can do so much more for them than you could ever know.

For seniors especially, this is our last fall term. And I know for most of us, especially myself, we’ve been consumed by a fixation with college applications, academics, extracurriculars, and friendships. This is all okay, and even natural. Yet I hope that you will also take a step back and reflect upon your finite Deerfield days, during which you’ll inevitably realize it’s coming to an end. So instead of wishing for this period of uncertainty over your next four years to speed up, hope that it will slow down, that you can check off another bucket list item before you graduate.

To all of Deerfield, stay strong, stay happy, and stay united. I’m confident we’ll get through this seasonal depression and be better than ever, together.

Yours in Service,  
John Qi Liu

In July 2024, McKinsey & Company, one of the most prestigious business consulting firms, released a survey that reported 71% of all companies which responded used generative AI in at least one business function. This number had been merely 33% in 2023. In 2025, the number could have only gone higher with breakthroughs in generative AI technologies and ever more funding allocated to the development of AI. We, the *Scroll* C Board, believe that gen. AI will become an integral part in professional settings as well as daily life.

However, despite the rise in the significance of gen. AI, Deerfield Academy chooses to embrace an academic policy that allows for near zero tolerance of the technology. Although the Academy’s official policy is to leave AI use to the discretion of the teacher, the administration has still enforced a firewall ban of most gen. AI websites on Deerfield’s wireless networks, including OpenAI’s ChatGPT and Google’s Gemini. This means that students using Deerfield’s internet could not access most of the commonly used AI websites.

We believe that this new policy against gen. AI is not justified. As an institution that aims to prepare students for a “rapidly changing world,” Deerfield should not shun away from what the Editorial Board of the *Scroll* collectively believes will be a crucial technology of the future. The Board believes that the current policies of the administration does not encourage AI literacy, a new and critical skill in today and tomorrow’s society.

The Deerfield administration’s rejection of gen. AI is most evident in our course catalog. While most of our peer boarding schools are scrambling to develop programs that give students experience working with AI and machine learning (ML), Deerfield has not yet developed a single course that directly engages with the concepts or usages of ML. Choate, for example, has an honors level machine learning course that gives students contact with the leading innovations in the field. While our peers are at least trying to adapt

Board Editorial

to the new social and academic order under AI, Deerfield has not developed a STEM-based course centered around AI. In effect, Deerfield is trying to shut itself off from almost all the influences of AI, and these actions contribute to the phenomenon of the “Deerfield bubble” that already bothers many who worry Deerfield students are too isolated from the real world.

Low AI exposure will also put us at a significant disadvantage to our peers. While our peers are learning to recognize the benefits and harms of gen. AI, we are kept in a greenhouse that secludes us from the technology throughout our high school careers. Although we acknowledge that gen. AI too often becomes an easy shortcut that avoids the process of struggling with difficult concepts, a firewall for all major gen. AI websites is too drastic and inefficient of a measure to combat the drawbacks posed by AI.

However, we should give the students the opportunity to grapple with these challenges. This is not to say that we should allow students to cheat by using AI, but rather give the students the chance to make the right decisions amidst the myriad of temptations that are distractions from learning. Cheating with AI is no different than cheating on exams or using external help: we can’t stop any of these from occurring entirely, but it’s the students themselves who determine how much they want to learn or take advantage of the course curriculum offered here. That said, we should still maintain a rigorous academic review process that punishes students for misusing the technology and rewards them for using it correctly.

Furthermore, we think that AI could be utilized as a technology that aids the teaching and learning process. Our traditional pedagogical practices rely on teachers as the sole resource to provide help to students. However, this system falls to inconvenience and inefficiency, as it becomes quite difficult to find a time outside of class that suits both the student and the teacher. As a result, teachers are often overlooked. A specially pro-

grammed AI assistant in teaching could drastically ease the process by offering explanations to students at the press of a button while also encouraging the struggle in learning as a real teacher would. Most of the *Scroll* C Board has had positive experiences in using AI to aid the process of learning. At the same time, the demand for teachers to be present during hours beyond classes are also reduced, giving more time to teachers who also need space for their personal and family lives. We acknowledge that there is the risk of AI hallucinating and generating fake information, which is exactly why we argue to expose students to AI during high school. By confronting misinformation, students are forced to learn to think more critically and cross validate their sources—skills necessary in today’s world dominated by AI-reinforced misinformation.

At the same time, we believe that Deerfield’s AI policy is too extreme. The firewall not only prevents students from using AI in school, it also restricts students from using gen. AI in their academic pursuits outside of Deerfield. Such a policy hinders students with extracurricular pursuits. Based on the rise in popularity of AI in recent years, students increasingly need to use it for projects, competitions, and research opportunities they have outside of the offerings of Deerfield. If Deerfield chooses not to help students to adapt to AI, the least it could do is to not interfere with students’ pursuits of excellence outside of our limited curriculum. We believe that Deerfield’s firewall, which blocks access to most gen. AI, neglects the freedom students have outside of school.

The solution is very simple: we believe that Deerfield should remove the firewall ban on generative AI and stop the demonization of AI. Deerfield should also strive to adapt and confront the changes in the world caused by AI, instead of simply ignoring them.

Why Health Class Should Be a Graduation Requirement

DAVIN PARK  
Staff Writer

What do you think is the most important life skill? Is it writing a good essay, knowing how to do algebra, or learning how to save a person’s life? Every student in Deerfield should leave knowing how to save a life, manage stress, and make informed choices about their well-being. Yet, despite this importance, health education is not a graduation requirement. Currently, only ninth and tenth graders taking five graded classes are required to take Health Seminar I and II. Others can graduate from Deerfield without ever taking a health class. It is a gap that feels inconsistent. When only some students receive basic health education and others don’t, it creates a skills and knowledge gap that everyone, regardless of academ-

ic background, will need one day.

For some students, taking the Health class is simply a scheduling outcome. Because of conflicts or the number of graded classes a student takes, some students end up with Health in their schedules while others may never have the opportunity. This means that learning how to be a healthy person, something that is universal, becomes a matter of chance. The lessons covered in Health are foundational tools that relate to every student, no matter what they plan to do during and after Deerfield.

During the Health Seminar classes, students discuss everything from CPR training and nutrition to addiction, relationships, and mental health. Deerfield’s CPR training is certified through the American Heart Association with instructors from the Institute of Wild Med. Students learn how

to perform compressions, use an AED, and respond to emergencies. Those couple of hours could one day make the difference between life and death, something few other high school courses can guarantee.

Other parts of the course have an equally enduring impact. One recent unit included watching *Ten Dollar Death Trip: Inside the Fentanyl Crisis*, a documentary that exposed how addiction ravages communities and individuals. It helped students see how a single, seemingly small decision could turn into a domino effect, reshaping the rest of people’s lives. These lessons teach empathy, responsibility, and an understanding of how health decisions mold both individual lives and society.

Health also puts much emphasis on mental well-being, which is rarely discussed in academic life. Students are reminded

about the resources at the D.S. Chen Health and Wellness Center, which has both professional medical and counseling support 24/7. While those resources exist, they often feel distant from daily student life; Health class bridges that gap, normalizing conversations about stress, balance, and seeking help. By reinforcing that mental health is a vital part of overall wellness and not an afterthought, Health class helps break the stigma around it. Students learn that asking for help isn’t a weakness but a representation of self-awareness and maturity.

Some would argue that taking Health would interfere with taking other electives or a sixth course. But two one-term courses out of a total of twelve terms is not asking a lot. The benefits of universal health education, such as increased awareness, safe-

ty, and emotional resilience, far outweigh the minor scheduling inconvenience. Even from an institutional perspective, requiring Health ensures that every Deerfield graduate leaves with the same preparation for life beyond school, not just academic readiness.

Deerfield students take pride in being prepared for college and life beyond. However, life rarely tests us on visual arts or photography; it tests us on how we react under pressure, how we care for ourselves, and how we support others. A well-rounded education should teach more than academic skills; it should teach us how to stay healthy, steady, and compassionate when it matters most. Perhaps it’s time Deerfield ensures that every student has the tools to do so.



# Opinion: the Old Sophomore Declamation Was Better

**ALICE CHEN & HEIDI LIANG**  
*Associate Editor & Staff Writer*

This fall, Deerfield Academy introduced a new format for the long standing sophomore declamation. In previous years, sophomores memorized and performed a published literary piece of their choice for its craft and insight. This year, instead of reciting an existing work, students were asked to write and perform an original speech about something they were “obsessed” with. After writing and performing the new sophomore declamation, many of us came away feeling dissatisfied with the assignment itself.

We believe that the new declamation, despite appearing open-ended, actually stifled creativity in two main ways. It restricted what we could write about, and it confined how we could express ourselves.

First, as part of the instructions, students were not allowed to write about any sports or extracurriculars because they were too boring. Personally, when writing our declamations, the only authentic obsessions we could think of were related to sports or extracurriculars; young, sophomore students are unlikely to have developed obsessions similar to those in the example works. Many other sophomores we spoke to shared similar experiences. As a result, we found ourselves writing about topics we didn’t fully care about, trying to emulate the niche examples we were given. We believe that the English department made an oversight when they assumed that all sophomores would have a niche, obscure obsession, and this oversight led to inauthentic work.

Second, we believe that the revision process boxed students into a rigid structure. Nearly every declamation we saw followed the same format of opening with an anecdotal story and ending with a contemplation, periodically switching between the two throughout the declamation. It seems impossi-

ble that 155 students from vastly different backgrounds and experiences all individually and independently arrived at the same structure for their final declamations. The uniformity that we saw in the final performances suggests that the assignment rewarded conformity rather than individuality.

The new assignment also breaks the progression of declamation across four years. Freshman declamation exposes students to literary elements; junior and senior declamations ask them to reflect and persuade from experience. Sophomore year, positioned between the novelty of ninth grade and the pressure of college admissions-oriented upperclassmen life, is a rare moment for intellectual curiosity and deep absorption. The previous sophomore declamation nurtured that curiosity. By reciting and internalizing a longer work, students meet writers who have spent decades refining their thoughts and craft. Memorizing and performing these texts required focus, patience, and humility. It also developed skills that actually matter later on, such as interpretation and the ability to inhabit a perspective different from one’s own.

For some students, the previous sophomore declamation created a lasting academic impact. When we spoke with Marco Feng ‘26, he described how memorizing a longer literary piece introduced him to the idea of prosody: how rhythm, sound, and language create meaning together. His piece, *In Praise of Folly*, opened a door for him. After completing the declamation, he began reading and memorizing poems on his own for genuine enjoyment. It taught him to pay attention to how words move and why they feel the way they do. It would be unrealistic to expect every student to form that kind of relationship with literature. However, the possibility of sparking that interest in literature is what made the old declamation valuable.

At its core, this debate isn’t just

about one assignment, but more about what kind of freedom we value in learning. Schools often equate freedom with choice, the ability to write one’s own piece, pick one’s own topic. But real freedom in learning is different. It is not only the freedom to speak, but the freedom to think, to be challenged, to wrestle with complex voices, and to discover something unexpected. A well designed assignment doesn’t simply let students do whatever they want, it invites them to engage meaningfully with something. That is why the question of freedom matters here, for it shapes how we define creativity, authenticity, and intellectual growth.

So which assignment actually offers more freedom? Some may argue that writing your own piece must be more freedom than memorizing someone else’s. Af-

ter all, isn’t that the highest form of self-expression? However, freedom is not only the ability to produce something original. Intellectual freedom is the ability to explore what we do not yet understand. The old declamation gave students space to develop a voice by studying how language works and how meaning is shaped. The new assignment asks students to arrive already in possession of that voice. For many sophomores, that expectation feels unlike freedom and more like pressure to perform yourself while you are still forming that self.

The previous declamation provided a deeper kind of freedom. Choosing a literary piece did not mean choosing something to merely satisfy the instructions of the assignment. It meant finding a text that resonated with you and staying with it long enough to un-

derstand why. There was freedom in the slow work of interpretation, in discovering how a writer’s voice moves and breathes. This was not the freedom to already know yourself, but the freedom to learn. By stepping into another mind, students could explore ideas way larger than their own.

The experience of the old declamation remained more valuable than the assignment that replaced it. The new assignment certainly offers a form of self-expression: students can speak in their own voices and share something personal. But the old declamation offered something rarer, the chance to be shaped by voices beyond your own, to practice empathy, and curiosity. The new format encourages output, while the old one cultivates growth.



COURTESY OF JOHN LIU/DEERFIELD SCROLL

## Deerfield Rigor Kills Curiosity

**ALICE CHEN**  
*Associate Editor*

Recently, I’ve begun thinking about how I want to structure my class schedule for junior year. I’ve been stacking my list with courses that are as rigorous as possible and considering what they will mean for my junior year experience. I came to one main conclusion: I won’t sleep very much.

This realization made me contemplate my Deerfield education. Specifically, I reflected on what a rigorous Deerfield class entails. I associate hard Deerfield classes with pages upon pages of reading, eight-hour days spent in the library studying for midterm tests, and overwhelmingly large amounts of work. I picture late nights working and falling asleep at my desk, countless missed hours of sleep, and failed attempts to balance academic schedules with extracurricular interests and social interactions.

It seems like Deerfield rigor is measured heavily based on the

sheer amount of time a student must pour into a class in order to keep up with the curriculum. But I think this is the wrong way to approach rigor.

I believe that classes can become more rigorous in two main ways: by requiring an increased volume of work and by involving more difficult or complex work. Increasing volume may look like requiring forty pages of reading instead of twenty, while increasing difficulty looks like taking a deeper dive into a subject or exploring more complex ideas; the two are not mutually exclusive.

The often unavoidable, objectively unhealthy sleep schedules that large portions of the student body follow show that Deerfield focuses more on the former method. In 2021, a survey conducted on the junior class with 95 respondents found that 91.6% of juniors would sleep more if they had less work. Additionally, 90% of respondents reported that they were feeling “super stressed.” These statistics show widespread overwork-

ing; it feels like there is a common understanding that students must sacrifice sleep, mental health, social connections, and overall well-being in order to succeed in difficult classes.

In *A Framework for Schools*, Head of School John Austin writes that “the purpose of schools is to enlarge the vision of young people, deepen and sustain their curiosity, and increase their appreciation of the world’s complexity.” In essence, schools are meant to help students find their passions and to encourage curiosity. However, in addition to being simply unhealthy, Deerfield’s model of rigor that overemphasizes volume restricts the ability of challenging classes to inspire passion in the students that take it. With excessive volume and overworking, no matter how much students love a subject, they begin to associate it with stress and fatigue.

Self-Determination Theory, a major psychological framework that compares the results of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation,

captures this struggle. Intrinsic motivation involves doing something out of enjoyment for it, while extrinsic motivation entails doing something for an external benefit such as a grade, a reward, or a punishment. The scientific theory argues that when people learn under extrinsic motivation, their intrinsic motivation for the subject declines.

Crucially, Deerfield’s heavy, stress-inducing use of volume to increase rigor is effectively killing students’ passion for it.

If Deerfield truly wants to “deepen and sustain [young people’s] curiosity,” it needs to change the way it approaches rigor. Deerfield can achieve this by prioritizing complexity over volume in classes. Instead of pushing students to consume large amounts of material, course programming should focus on helping students learn the necessary volume as efficiently as possible, making space for deeper thinking and intellectual exchange about more complex topics. Academic Affairs

must enforce homework limits. Every Deerfield student has heard of the supposed fifty minute and, for honors classes, seventy minute homework limits. However, I doubt many students have felt its effects. Enforcing these time caps not only promotes healthier lifestyles among students but also prevents the negative associations that lead students towards developing a dislike for topics they previously enjoyed. Teachers can also collect student input. Periodic surveys on the pace of a class, the method in which it is taught, and general feedback on the class can illuminate issues with the curriculum. For example, if the vast majority of students claim that they are consistently spending more than two hours a night on homework, this may indicate the need for teachers to find more efficient ways to teach the material.

Deerfield needs to start prioritizing complexity and depth over volume. It needs to stop killing curiosity.



## Post AP Art: Hand Paintings

**STELLA HU**  
Staff Writer

Currently hanging on the first floor of the Hess Center for Arts is the Post-AP Studio Art class is showcasing their most recent art project entitled, “Hand Paintings.” Spanning the course of several weeks, students engaged in a thoughtful process of learning how to transfer the intricacies of the human hand onto paper.

The “Hand Paintings” centers around the illustration of the human hand and aim to represent a variety of themes, whether that be time, broken promises, or friendships. As the second major assignment in the Fall Term for the Post-AP class, this project allowed students to begin working from direct observation and later expand upon them with their own ideas.

Visual and Performing Arts Teacher Mercedes Taylor, who assigned the project, said that her main goal was to teach the students the importance of process. “When you see a finished piece, you know, it’s hard to see all the work that has gone behind, from beginning to think of an idea and having a conceptual layer.”

Starting from lessons of simply observing one’s hands, Mrs. Taylor directed students to focus on the various shapes and contours that make up the human hand, challenging them to synthesize the way they see the composition of space. Later on, students expanded their range of inspiration as they started to engage with works from different artists such as Käthe Kollwitz and Charles Wright, analyzing the way these artists use hands to express emotions.

When starting the drawing



ALBERT YUK/DEERFIELD SCROLL

phase, Mrs. Taylor urged her students to focus on the question: “What do you want your hands to express?” From this, they developed their sketches into pieces of art that aligned with their creative ideas. Students in the class experimented with ideas ranging from familial relationships to the portrayal of time. When talking about her piece, a student in the class, Allegra Sandell ’27, described her piece as a coming of age story. “There is a mother’s hand holding on to the hand of a baby in the bottom of the painting, and then an adolescent hand reaching for a stopwatch that is being held onto by an older hand.”

Although these paintings focus primarily on the use of charcoal and pencil graphite, Mrs. Taylor

hopes that within this drawing medium, students can still exercise their artistic freedom and wrestle with various compositional choices. “Once they go through the lessons of drawing hands, seeing the works of other artists, and then practicing, at some point it’s like okay, you go. You are driving the ideas and the composition. You are deciding which materials to use,” said Mrs. Taylor. She further explained that “students are now independent and also feel they own their work.”

Coming from AP, these students are very experienced with how to use graphite and charcoal, just not on this scale. Upon reflection, Sandell shared that the most technically challenging aspect of this project was capturing the nuanced details

of the human hand, saying, “it was challenging to draw all the little details on a hand because there are so many small pieces. Specifically shading and making the wrinkles on the hand look as realistic as possible.”

As this project comes to a close, Mrs. Taylor hopes that the students walk away with the lesson that they can finish anything they set their mind to. Upon starting this project, students were stepping into new territory. “They have some ideas, they have the tools, but they don’t know exactly from where they start and where exactly they are going to finish,” said Mrs. Taylor. However, students had to learn how to manage these uncertainties and how to stick with their ideas every step

of the process. Upon completion, these hand paintings are yet another piece that students can add to their art portfolio. “Throughout the years, we build art portfolios so that they can go back to those portfolios and say, ‘I did it once, I can do it again,’” said Mrs. Taylor, who hopes students will carry this mentality in all future art projects.

## Artist of The Issue: Lynn Sung

**AARON HAN**  
Associate Editor

As a child, Lynn Sung ’26 was the only member of her family to play an instrument. After switching from the piano to the violin, Sung initially displayed little enthusiasm towards her new instrument. However, Sung’s passion began to grow over time as she watched other musicians perform. “One day, my mom showed me a bunch of videos of famous violinists...they were always playing with closed eyes, and really feeling the music,” she said. “I decided to close my own eyes like they did, and soon I found myself getting immersed in the music... that’s when I knew that I was interested in the violin.”

Sung moved to the United States at the age of sixteen to begin her freshman year at Deerfield, where she joined the Deerfield Orchestra and Chamber. At the same time, Sung enrolled in the Juilliard Pre-College to advance her violin studies, balancing her Deerfield classes during the week with Juilliard coursework during the weekends. The constant commuting between Deerfield and New York, which often takes up to three hours by car, has been part of Sung’s routine since her freshman year. “Honestly, it caused a lot of stress, because I don’t really have time to spend with my friends, or on campus, or doing my homework,” Sung explained. “My entire Saturday is basically Juilliard— I’m taking music theory, ear training, chamber, orchestra, and private lessons. It’s

really not that interesting, but it does help a lot with violin.”

Despite the demands of her schedule, Sung appreciates the time she spends in New York. “Being in New York is fun, and it’s a privilege that I can go there every weekend,” she remarked. “You get good food, and it’s just a nice change of pace from Deerfield.”

Over the years, Sung has worked to reconcile the competitive and artistic aspects of music. “Music is mostly about competition, and once you reach a certain level, you need to show the public how good you are and confront how other people view you as a musician,” she explained. “For a long time, this competition caused a lot of anxiety for me, and I had a hard time practicing or listening to music because of that.”

Sung noted that her relationship with music has evolved, thanks in part to the support she received from Deerfield. “Having lessons with [Ensemble Coach and Music Lesson Instructor] Mr. Berner really helped me to love music again, apart from being acknowledged and getting compliments,” she said. “He taught me how to view music itself as a different thing from competition.” Sung also credited the Chamber Music program with broadening her perspective, acknowledging that, “Chamber definitely helped me by enlarging my musical spectrum. Last year, I tried playing viola for the first time in the chamber group, which really helped me understand the

structure of music and the communication between different instruments.”

Sung’s dedication and skill have not gone unnoticed by members of the Deerfield community. Fellow violinist Naomi Kim ’28 said, “It impresses me how she makes so much sound—deep sound. Even in practice rooms, where sound doesn’t resonate, [Sung’s] playing still sounds beautiful and full of emotion, even when she practices casually. I think this shows how much work she’s put into her playing over the years and how seriously she takes playing the instrument.”

Kim also described Sung’s leadership and presence in their chamber group. “[Sung] is so fun during chamber class and she always adds to the fun environment, but also completely focuses when we need to, leading our string quartet as the first violin.”

When asked about a memorable moment in her musical career, Sung recalled a concert in her sophomore year when a member of the audience began to cry while listening to her performance. “That feeling was very fulfilling,” she said. “To know that your own performance can impact someone on such a personal level really encouraged me.”

Looking toward the future, Sung spoke about her plan to pursue both music and psychology during her time in college. “I hope I can play music forever, because even if I’m not performing, it’ll always be an important part of who I am.”



ALBERT YUK/DEERFIELD SCROLL



# Mr. Leistler Brings Students to The Met

**AARON HAN**  
*Associate Editor*  
*Continued from Front*

For Art History Teacher John Leistler, the trip to The Met was a continuation of a long-standing tradition. “Before I came to Deerfield, I used to teach in the suburbs of New York, and so I used to take my class [to The Met] once a month,” he said. “It didn’t feel like a school trip—it was a group of somewhat friends going to The Met.” Since coming to Deerfield, Mr. Leistler has worked to organize several such visits each year. “It’s not a required trip, but just to get to go and see the enormity of the space, see the crowd, see some of the art that we’ve studied, and see what it’s like to see them for real instead of just a slide of it in class,” he explained.

Mr. Leistler’s accumulated knowledge of the museum allowed him to curate an experience that directly connects to the Art History class’s curriculum, while allowing students time to explore independently. “At one point, when I was younger and in graduate school, I went five or six times a week to The Met, mostly because I had a terribly small apartment,” he said. “And so I know The Met well. I’ve done a lot of tours over the years there, so it feels like a second home to me.”

Both the teacher and the students speak to the impact of seeing art in person as opposed to in class. “It is always better to see the actual thing and the real size and how it is displayed,” Mr. Leistler noted. “And I think when you see any artwork, and not just seeing a picture of it, you’re reminded that somebody made this. Somebody had a vision to create something.” Mikaylah Meertins ’26 echoed the sentiment, saying, “It was my first time in The Met, and I was taken aback when I first entered...It was really cool, and a lot better than seeing it on a slide.”

For this trip, the group mainly focused on the Greek and Ro-

man galleries, as well as the newly opened African and Oceanian wings. “The Oceania and African wings have been closed for the last five years...and I wanted our students to not only see the art, but to think about what is new,” Mr. Leistler explained. “A lot of what The Met aims to do is to infuse as much dignity into art that was once viewed as exotic...I wanted them to really think about what The Met is trying to do with the arts of Africa, and whether it was successful for them.”

One highlight of the trip for Meertins was the Greek section of The Met, where she encountered kouros statues: ancient Greek sculptures of young men used in funerary practices. “It’s supposed to be the depiction of the ideal young man,” she explained. “When you look at +it, you’re supposed to feel that you have the potential to go on and be great...it’s really inspiring.” Mr. Leistler expanded on the same piece, saying that “Greek mourners would go to the graveyard to be sad about somebody who had died a loved one, but when they saw this funerary sculpture, it would remind

them that when they leave, to go live their lives as best as they can.”

For both, the trip was a much-needed break from the classroom. “I would love to do it again... It was super refreshing to be able to get out of the classroom and be in a place that’s as significant as The Met,” said Meertins. “Art History is the course that I teach where people feel the smartest the fastest,” Mr. Leistler remarked. “If you learn one artwork well, you feel empowered in a way that you did not half an hour ago...so it’s always fun for them to see it for the first time themselves.”

For Mr. Leistler, the trips to The Met ultimately serve as a reminder of what makes art and the study of it so relevant. “You don’t have to make art—I am totally untalented. But mine is appreciation, and mine is the historian’s thing,” he said. “We all spend time on our phones, and we’re all assaulted by thousands of images a day, and so it is always wise for us to just sharpen our own understanding of how visuals can work on us.”



COURTESY OF THE MET

# Community Dance Classes

**ZARA ALI**  
*Associate Editor*

Two years ago, Skye Maves ’27 and Alumna Grace Taylor ’25 started hosting weekly dance classes to bring together a group of energetic kids who shared a common love for dance. Currently, Maves is running these classes with Annie Loring ’26. When asked what motivated Maves to start these classes, she noted that she was previously a dance mentor and shared, “It’s really fun to not always have a teacher, but almost like a big sister in the class. So, when I saw all the faculty kids running around campus all the time, I really wanted to find a way to continue to teach little kids.” Loring decided to collaborate with Maves because she too believed in the mission of uplifting young aspiring dancers. She explained, “I love kids and being able to nurture and engage their curiosity and love for dance has been an incredibly rewarding experience. It’s been amazing to be able to continue to teach at Deerfield and connect with the community around me.” Maves and Loring are passionate about inspiring kids in the community to see that dance is for everyone.

Every Saturday morning, Maves and Loring hold these classes in the small dance studio in the Hess and invite kids from across the community, such as faculty kids, to learn how to dance. Loring explained that the best words to fully capture the essence of kids would be “curious, endearing and energetic.” Walking in with cheesy smiles and pure enthusiasm to learn from Deerfield Academy’s very own dancers, Maves describes the kids as “so excited to be there.” She continued, “A lot of them don’t dance any other time outside of our classes, so it’s a very special experience for them and us. Some of them have been dancing with us for the three years since we started the program.” The bond Maves and Loring share with the kids goes be-

yond the dance studio. “Afterwards, I’ll sometimes take some of them to lunch in the dining hall or just seeing them around campus makes me smile so much,” Maves added.

Maves and Loring teach two age groups: children aged 3-6 and 7-12 years old. The younger age group is “like a bitty ballet class,” Maves explained. “That class is focused on getting the kids to be comfortable in their bodies, coordination, and social skills in the classroom setting, because a lot of these kids don’t go to school yet.” Because of their youth, Maves and Loring enjoy doing games and exercises to encourage the kids to “open their imagination and be creative.” The older age group is a jazz class for kids who are more experienced in dance. A class with this group contains a lot more choreography with an emphasis on technique. “Usually we start [class] with a warm-up and we’ll do across-the-floor, working on typical skills for the age group,” Maves explains. “Then we teach a combo every class, so that they can practice picking up choreography quickly.”

One of Maves’s favorite moments from working with the kids was last year when her jazz class watched the International Dance Competition. She described their reactions as “just so amazed and inspired,” explaining that this was something that resonated with her as a dancer, and she loved sharing that experience with them.

According to Maves, she and Loring seek to “incorporate more of the Deerfield dancers into the program this year,” offering students in the dance co-curricular the opportunity to apply as substitutes when they are unavailable. She added, “Also, we really want them to perform at our shows in the winter,” noting that the kids “come watch the shows all the time, so the opportunity to perform on the same stage would be a very memorable experience.”

# Deerfield Exhibits Private Art Collection at Historic Deerfield

**TESS HO**  
*Associate Editor*

Deerfield Academy’s collection of paintings and drawings is located in the Flynt Center of Early New England Life on 37 Old Main Street. The exhibition highlights works of art from the Academy’s collection, many of which have not been displayed for public view in years. Deerfield Academy holds a rich collection of American art ranging from colonial American portraiture to early 20th-century modernist art pieces. Many of the artworks, which were located in the neighboring town of Greenfield, belonged to Rowena Russell Potter, and were given to the Academy in 1960 to honor her father, Charles P. Russell. Potter built a lasting resource for the Academy’s art education by assembling a collection that chronicled the history of American art. Her acquisitions aligned with the growing interest in American art that emerged during World War II. Simultaneously, she donated her collection of American decorative arts to Historic Deerfield.

The Academy’s collection includes a “who’s who” of American art across the centuries, and the exhibition showcases diverse artistic styles and themes throughout American history. Eighteenth-century British colonial artists like John Singleton Copley and Benja-

min West created portraits of early colonists and landscapes, which reflects the continued connection to England. Following the American Revolution, figures such as Charles Willson Peale depicted the burgeoning republic through his visual representation of the new nation. After the Civil War began, Eastman Johnson used realistic genre scenes and everyday portrayals to comment on the country’s social changes. Artists William H. Beard and John F. Peto also delved into these themes through their animal and still-life paintings.

While at the Flynt Center, Graphic Editor and Head Layout Editor for The Scroll Ryan Bai ’26, who visited the gallery along with his Art and Drawing co-curricular class, went to the second floor to observe other fine decorative arts, including New England furniture and clocks, American power horns, Chinese export porcelain, and a variety of pottery. He stated, “The exhibition captures the essence of the historic Deerfield energy, reminding me of a lifestyle that was once prevalent on this land.” Jonathan Xu ’28, who also visited the exhibition, added, “The exhibit gave me a deeper understanding of the history of Deerfield and the culture and history of colonial America. I was greatly intrigued by the Deerfield showcase since I never knew our

school had such a vast collection of artworks.”

The art collections are arranged in more than 80 glass cases, with takeaway handouts on the subject of English glass, Japanese furniture, Fakes and Forgeries, and English delftware. Inside the cases, there is information on each piece, but accessing the information on Historic Deerfield’s database is also an option. Xu added, “the installation displays collections of objects that have rarely been shown to the public, which is what makes it so unique.”

Historic Deerfield’s exhibition brings together a rich assemblage of Deerfield Academy’s American paintings and drawings to explore the narratives of artists who shaped art history before World War I. When asked about the takeaways from visiting the Flynt Center, Bai expressed, “The historic aspect of the exhibition challenges my understanding of my place in this world. It definitely inspired me to explore Western traditional portrait paintings and furniture as a potential direction for my next artwork.” Similarly, Xu noted that the collection of artworks was a representation of Deerfield’s history and the portraits provided him with inspiration for future paintings.



COURTESY OF HISTORIC DEERFIELD



## Winter Sports Train Off Season

DAVID DONG  
Staff Writer

As the fall season came to a close, Deerfield athletes began preparing for their upcoming winter seasons. From squash courts to the hockey rink to the erg room, student athletes across campus have been training, building skill, strength, and camaraderie before the first whistle of the official season.

Squash is among one of the winter sports offered at Deerfield. “When our program attracts college-bound athletes, it’s become increasingly common for the players to feel the pressure to perform and maintain a high level in preparation for their season,” Boys’ Varsity Squash Head Coach Ryan Tyree said.

This fall, the Boys’ Varsity Squash team began their typical level of commitment in off-season training. The team held captain’s practice every Friday and, occasionally Saturdays. Furthermore, they facilitate optional fitness sessions. Captain Kyle Yang ’26 said, “Everyone has squash as their main sport and is motivated to improve. It makes our team practice time arrangement more flexible.”

According to Yang, organizing off-season practices was not an easy effort. “The biggest challenge about leading off-season practice is that nobody has an obligation to come,” Yang not-

ed. Nevertheless, much of the team still showed up. “The attendance has not been a problem. We are normally missing at most one or two players,” he added.

Coach Tyree echoed these thoughts saying, “I noticed that although the off-season training is individualized and therefore does not always naturally transfer to team building.” He continued, “overlap for the players at the facility on a regular basis, the team does benefit from the camaraderie and spirit built early on during off-season.” Despite not being able to coach due to athletic conference leagues’ rules and guidelines, Coach Tyree took part as a resource for the team by offering tactical advice and helping with mental preparation.

Most importantly, he emphasized, “maintaining an overall level or quality of play is particularly beneficial for injury prevention, so that once the season begins, our top athletes can lead the way, and feel good about the shape that they are in.”

The Girls’ Varsity Hockey team, too, used the off-season window to prepare for the approaching regular season, which began with eight matches across the first three weeks.

Discussing the team’s fall training focus, Hockey Off-Season Training Director Timothy McVaugh explained, “hockey is somewhat unique in that skating is crucial, and the only way to improve skating

is by getting on the ice.” However, neither him nor Girls Varsity Hockey Head Coach Brooke Fernandez are allowed to coach the group on the ice until after Choate day, the end of the fall season. Despite this restriction, the team organized off-season training. The sessions provided time for athletes to work on stride mechanics and strengths that are otherwise hard to focus on during the game-intensive winter.

While off-season training seems to be more individualized, the fall development league provided an opportunity for the team to play together on weekends. “The ups and downs of that experience helped those players develop closer connections with one another,” noted Coach McVaugh.

For the Deerfield rowing program, training is a year round process. The team dedicated time to training in the fall and will continue their momentum in winter with hopes of building a foundation for their spring season. “Rowing is a sport that requires a great deal of strength and endurance, so the more time we spend training, the better off we will be because we’re fitter and stronger,” said Boys Varsity Rower Zander Auth ’26.

Winter rowing is a smaller winter program at Deerfield composed of roughly twenty top upperclassmen rowers, who value the additional off-season time for concentrated training. Underclassmen

rowers, too, occasionally participate. While the athletes are encouraged to explore other sports to become more well-rounded, they typically erg during their free time, after co-curriculars, or on weekends.

Despite the off-season program operating with a small roster, the training intensity remains high. The team holds six scheduled practice sessions every week from Monday through Saturday. Rowers mainly use off-season training as an opportunity to focus on physical conditioning. Typically, rowers on the team do steady-state workouts to build a strong aerobic base which reserves more time for the team to work on on-the-water techniques in the spring. Auth explained, “If you think of it like a pyramid, the wider the base is, the higher the peak can be.” He added, “Winter training is about developing that base, building fitness and strength, so that in the spring, we can reach a higher peak in performance.”

Across all winter sports, off-season training is used to build physical foundation and mental readiness for the season yet to come. The hours dedicated to training built the groundwork for the regular season. All winter varsity sport teams will officially kick off the regular season this week, with schedules posted on the Student Bulletin. Deerfield teams and athletes step into competition not just fit, but focused and connected following months of unseen effort.

## Athlete of the Issue: Keira Austen

MICHAEL WU  
Staff Writer

Deerfield cheerleader, tri-varsity athlete, and an incoming student-athlete for the Brown University hockey team Keira Austen ’26 joined Deerfield as a freshman. She had primarily hoped to play for the Girls’ Varsity Hockey team, but also participated and made the team for both the Girls’ Varsity Soccer and the Girls’ Varsity Lacrosse.

Soccer was one of Austen’s first sports, as she often played with her sister, Olivia Austen ’27, in their backyard. Both of Austen’s parents played Division I Soccer and this further influenced her to begin her athletic journey with the sport at a young age.

Some of Austen’s favorite Deerfield memories come from the soccer team. She recalled the soccer pre-season trip in Spain this summer, where the team bonded over long bus rides, watching pro soccer games, and singing in Pace’s bodega. In addition, during Austen’s sophomore year, the soccer team beat Choate Rosemary Hall 2-1 during Choate Day, despite a large disadvantage in rankings. Austen emphasized that this was “genuinely the best feeling ever.”

Austen recalled how one of her happiest seasons throughout her time at Deerfield was her freshman year soccer season, as there was less pressure on her. She felt that

each year came with “more and more pressure.” The progressing responsibility eventually led Austen to become captain of the soccer team her senior year. Despite the added responsibility of captainship, she said she still enjoys playing soccer as the increased pressure makes “it[playing soccer] way more fun.”

On and off the field, Austen works with the co-captains to care for and cultivate a healthy team culture. “[Austen] is such a great teammate and I think our leadership styles worked well together ... On the field, she has such a strong presence and I think the rest of our team, specifically underclassmen, really looked up to her,” said co-captain Eleanor DuPont ’26. DuPont added that when Austen was injured, “I got to experience how she cheered on her teammates and continued to bring the energy even as a captain on the bench.”

On another note, Austen started lacrosse in seventh grade because the sport was popular in her town. She was able to carry this interest to Deerfield. As a freshman Austen played defense on the Varsity Girls’ Lacrosse team. Austen said that lacrosse is her newest commitment, yet she still enjoys playing on the team. She describes playing lacrosse as a “zero stress kinda sport” where she can relax and have fun with her teammates.

Specifically, Austen mentioned that



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on the pre-season lacrosse trip, the team would go to the “shark attack capital of the world, New Smyrna Beach” each year. “[The trip was] one of the most fun things all year,” she said.

Despite her love for soccer and lacrosse, Austen considers hockey to be her favorite sport because it is deemed one of the “cooler” sports. Austen mentions that when she was younger, she figure skated and after, she would see the “big girls” playing hockey. From then on she decided she wanted to play hockey.

Austen recieved her commitment letter to play Division I Hockey for Brown University during her sophomore year. Expressing gratitude, she said that she “couldn’t have gotten that offer without my teammates on Mid Fairfield and Deerfield and my sister, Olivia.” Austen noted that she’s excited to spend another 3 years with her sister, who also committed to Brown University after Deerfield.

Assistant Coach of Girls Varsity Hockey Toby Emerson described Austen in three words: “nasty, skilled, and strong.” Mr. Emerson also noted that Austen learned throughout her years on the team to be “less hard on herself,” which Mr. Emerson believes is an important skill for a defensive hockey player like herself. Emerson also offered that obtaining a positive mindset is a skill that Austen has continued to work on throughout her hockey career that will carry into other sports.

Despite still being a little tough on herself, Mr. Emerson explained that Austen always makes sure her teammates feel supported. Mr. Emerson noted that after making a mistake, no matter the challenge, Austen’s next thought is to bounce back by playing harder, all while continuing to stay positive. Mr. Emerson highlighted Austen’s knack for “hard work, grit and toughness,” showcasing the many facets of Austen as an athlete and person. Mr. Emerson remains confident that Austen will be able to carry these skills with her to Brown University in the future.

Reflecting on her journey through Deerfield sports, Austen hopes to enjoy the last seasons of her senior year. “[I feel like I have] a family on each team ... [and] just want to have the most fun with my teammates and try to savor every last moment of playing for Deerfield.” Though she is sad to leave the family she has found in her hockey teammates, Austen remains excited for her future in hockey beyond Deerfield.

Throughout her time at Deerfield, Austen, a tri-varsity athlete, described how she was truly able to find a true community in the different sports teams she played on. Austen explained how she began to view her teammates as family as each season passed and although she is sentimental about leaving, she anticipates her future at Brown University, especially with her sister by her side.



COURTESY OF DEERFIELD COMMUNICATIONS



# Choate Spirit Week Themes

SOFIA GOVI &  
CECE SALTER  
Staff Writers

Continued from Front

Tuesday continued with Twin Day, a long-standing theme that has been a part of Choate Week since 2019. On Twin Day, friends would coordinate their outfits to match each other's, often seen wearing matching hoodies, pajamas, or T-shirts. While some students simply dress in similar clothing and imitate each other's hairstyles and accessories, Sabrina Schulhof '29 and Stella Goldsmith '29 dressed up as Oompa Loompas, painting their faces blue and wearing green wigs. On Wednesday, students would dress up with their fall co-curriculars, giving them a medium to demonstrate the togetherness and spirit of their co-curriculars. Harmoni Dobbins '26, Cheerleader and Varsity Volleyball Captain, explained, "We try to make it something fun, so everyone can have a different character part in the costume." Crosbie stated, "My favorite theme is always co-curric day... the stuff that I saw from the girls'

teams ... were some of the best coordinated outfits that I've seen." Whether the team is an undefeated varsity sport, at the thirds-level, or an arts program, every co-curricular buys into their specific team's outfit. This year, Deerfield's Varsity Volleyball Team received the best outfit award from the Deerfield Cheerleaders. Crosbie noted, "the funniest was definitely the volleyball team and their Sponge-Bob SquarePants outfits. Those were hilarious." Dobbins went through the process that captains go through to decide their theme for Choate Week. "We try to make it something fun so everyone can have a different character or part in the costume," she said. She claimed that providing a different costume for every team member promotes a sense of belonging, especially for new students. Thursday's theme brought a change to Choate Week. Traditionally, Thursday has been 'Generations Day', where each grade dressed as a different age group, ranging from babies to senior citizens. This year, the Deerfield Cheerleaders introduced a new

theme: Pajama Day. Crosbie noted that "we decided to switch generation day with PJ day because we felt like sophomores/juniors didn't really do much as teenagers and adults." Making this change provided the Academy's student body with an accessible way to dress up during Choate Week. Pajama Day was introduced with the hopes of increasing student's participation in the themes. Friday wrapped up Choate week by returning to traditional

class dress in the school colors of green and white. This Deerfield tradition has remained a staple for generations. The Choate Week theme of green and white class dress has traditionally served as a reminder that Choate Week is not purely about competition, but also about creating a unified student body. Choate Week is claimed to define Deerfield's school spirit and instill motivation to beat their longstanding rival, Choate.



COURTESY OF DEERFIELD COMMUNICATIONS

# Shorts on Sports: From the Captains

CELINE CHANG  
Associate Editor

As the fall athletic season enters its final days, Deerfield captains reflected on their teams' journeys, sharing early challenges, lasting memories, and the motivation that will drive them through the remainder of the season.

## Boys' Varsity Cross Country

The Boys' Varsity Cross Country team saw a largely undefeated season, with the exception of a single loss to Exeter. Notably, Thijs Wittink '25 won first place in the NEPSAC JV Cross Country Race, being the first Deerfield Athlete in over ten years to do so. Captain Reid McCoy '26 described the team's success as a reflection of its emphasis on individual improvement. "Our hope is that every runner develops their own speed and mindset throughout the season," McCoy said. He noted that the focus on personal growth has created a stronger collective team performance. "This year, we have more people who come to practice excited to do the hard work that it takes to achieve success," he added. McCoy expressed that the captains have become "more engaged" by helping run practices and form closer connections with teammates. He also gave a shoutout to new runners like Will Golding '29 and Hayston Hay '29 for their "incredible attitudes" and strong race performances.

## Boys' Varsity Soccer

The Boys' Varsity Soccer Team has faced challenges with early injuries but continued to focus on unity and effort. "We wanted to be a competitive team in the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC)," said

Captain Alex Salvo '26, adding that setbacks haven't diminished their strong team chemistry. Salvo explained that this year's leadership structure, with four captains instead of two, has helped the team find balance and take on responsibility. "We all have our strong points as captains," he said. The team began the year with a pre-season training trip to Spain, where they built a tight bond through shared matches, travel, and cultural experiences. On Choate Day, the team reached their goal, as Salvo described, to "finish the season on a strong note," by winning the game.

## Girls' Varsity Soccer

Captain Keira Austin '26 said the Girls' Varsity Soccer team's main goal remained the same each year: to make the playoffs and "feel good about our performance and effort every game." The team spent 11 days in Spain with the boys' team during preseason, training, competing, and bonding. "From playing semiprofessional teams to signing with a musician in his bodega, our team got so much closer," Austin said. The trip's impact showed early in the season, with a 2-0 win against Milton. Austin highlighted sophomore goalie Winnie Underwood '28 as a key player, describing her as "one of the hardest workers on the field" whose performances have been crucial to the team's success.

## Boys' Varsity Water Polo

Boys Varsity Water Polo entered this season focused on building a foundation for future success. "We have a lot of young talent and only a handful of upperclassmen," said Captain Patrick Zhang '26, "so our goal was to lay the groundwork for the years ahead." Zhang described this

year's energy as "boisterous" and full of potential. "When directed toward something productive, we play and practice incredibly well," he said. He also recognized standout performances from GD Lee '28, as well as newcomers James Leung '29 and Saxon Girodet '28, whose contributions have been "incredibly valuable."

## Girls' Varsity Volleyball

Under the leadership of co-captain Captain Harmoni Dobbins '26 and Evelyn Kunde '26, Girls Varsity Volleyball held a 16-3 record and made it to the quarterfinals of the NEPSAC Tournament. Their shared goal has been to create a "competitive, safe, and welcoming community." "We came into the season focused and determined," Dobbins said. "Everyone on the team is here for one reason: to win."

The team faced a challenge against the King School, a Class C opponent that competes in Class A. After that setback, the team used the experience to refocus and fuel their motivation throughout the rest of the season. "We all got in a circle and said, 'We lost yesterday, but we've won so many other games, and we know it's possible to beat them,'" Dobbins recalled. Outside of competitions, team bonding has also been central to their success. Dobbins emphasized the team dinners after practices as one of the key traditions that strengthened their connection. "After every practice, we try to come together as a team and spend at least 30 minutes at team dinner together," she said. Having been on the team for four years, Dobbins described the relationships she's built as some of her "most cherished."



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# Varsity Scores

## Boys Football

14-42

vs Brunswick

20-51

vs Choate

## Boys Soccer

3-1

vs Williston

1-4

vs Northfield Mount Hermon

0-4

vs Choate

## Girls Soccer

1-1

vs Hotchkiss

5-0

vs Wilbraham

1-2

vs Choate

## Boys Cross Country

20-40

vs Northfield Mount Hermon

4th Place

vs Interschol

## Girls Cross Country

31-24

vs Northfield Mount Hermon

10th Place

vs Taft

## Girls Field Hockey

2-3

vs Williston

6-1

vs Choate

0-2

at NEPSAC Tournament: Quarterfinals

## Girls Volleyball

1-3

vs Taft

3-0

vs St. Pauls

3-1

vs Choate

1-3

vs Loomis Chaffee School, NEPSAC Tournament: Quarterfinals



## Top 5 Deerfield Traditions

**SPENCER TREES**  
*Staff Writer*

Deerfield has a long history, stretching all the way back to the school's founding in 1797. With a lengthy history comes many beloved traditions that are cherished by both students and staff alike. Here are a list of 5 favorites amongst students:

**Choate Week**

Students love Choate Week because of the tradition's rich competitiveness and embodiment of school pride. During Choate week, students and faculty bleed green more than ever. Students bombard each other with battle cries and enjoy bacon cookouts as the anticipation for the fateful day continues to grow. The week leading up to Choate Day is capped off by the pep rally and bonfire, fully invigorating students with school spirit. Students welcome Choate Week as a much needed change of pace. Ted Freedman '27 said, "It [Choate Week] reinforces school spirit and togetherness that can dry up [during] this time of year when we're settled into school routines and the weather is getting harsher." Choate Day provides an opportunity for students from both schools to connect and compete. Among the sports teams squaring off, the long awaited football game between the rival schools is a classic. Unfortunately, however, the greatest team of all, Quad Squad, is unable to compete in the beloved tradition.

**Semi-formal Dance**

The Semi-formal Dance, colloquially known as Semi, takes place during the Turkey Term. As soon as students return from Thanksgiving break, they begin to dress up in formal attire, and in the weeks leading up frantically searching for a date. Scquckly scrapping together a charming poster in the iLab, and hoping to snag for some cute pics. Another plus of the event is the free food. A major down side of the dance includes the requirement of female interaction from male students in order to find a date.

**Step Up**

While a bittersweet ceremony overall, students still get to enjoy the end-of-year Step Up dance, as it is a rite of passage in which every class rises to their new grade. During this ceremony, students also convene around a large bonfire, feeling both the physical and figurative warmth of their new class. The soon-to-be seniors wear white, symbolizing their transition and new role in the school. Charlotte McFadzean '26, a senior, reflected on the experience, saying, "It's the last day of the school year. You get to be with your class as you become the new senior of the school. It's an important event to become a leader."

**School Meeting**

Every Wednesday students file into the Hess Auditorium for School Meeting, which occurs each

Wednesday. Students sit with their grade and shout their grade-wide cheers, before culminating in a collective singing of the Deerfield Cheering Song. There are presentations from different departments in the school, mindful moments, and game show style activities. Students also get the opportunity to share their experience through programs such as the Deerfield Story. Senior Bryan Gianvecchio '26 elaborated, saying, "I like that there's a good variety of things. Some academic stuff, performing arts, and the occasional motivational speaker." He added, "Yeah, it's a good time. You get to be with your friends and experience cool music."

**Sit-down Meals**

Sit-down meals occur during lunch on every weekday except Wednesdays, and excluding the winter term, on Tuesday and Thursday dinner. As part of the school tradition, all students must serve as their tables first or second waiter, usually once per school year for both roles. The tables are also assigned randomly, allowing for interactions between unfamiliar students and staff. and creating a unique experience. Sit-down serves an important role in fostering community: Deerfield states on their website, "At Deerfield we believe that sit-down meals provide an important opportunity for strengthening our community."

## Album of the Issue

**JOSIE KALISH**  
*Page Editor*

Senior Girls: Wish You Were Here - Pink Floyd (Olivia Baker) Knocks Me Off My Feet - Stevie Wonder Stevie (Janis Zempare)	Maneater - Daryl Hall & John Oates (Luc Ruminski)
Senior Boys: The Morning - The Weeknd (Cooper Lawson) Innerbloom - RÜFÜS DU SOL (Joaquim Cavalcante)	Sophomore Girls: Bathroom Light - Mt. Joy (Lily Johnson) Indigo - Sam Barber (Stella Hu)
Junior Girls: A Couple Minutes - Olivia Dean (Linnea Knox) Sports Car - Tate McRae (Emsy Pfeifler)	Sophomore Boys: Rock Your Body - Justin Timberlake (Tommy Li) Finesse - Bruno Mars (Carter Schloat)
Junior Boys: Ode to a Conversation Stuck in Your Throat - Del Water Gap (Dannny Widmer)	Freshman Girls: run for the hills - Tate McRae (Gabby Kilroy) Sunday - The Cranberries (Mina Hata) Freshman Boys: Barefoot Blue Jean Night - Jake Owen (Will Cleary) Love Galore - Travis Scott & SZA (Justin Treyz)



YONG DING/DEERFIELD SCROLL

## Deerfield Crossword

Good luck completing November's edition of the Deerfield Scroll Crossword!

ACROSS

1. Just slightly

5. Gold or silver, e.g.

10. "I've got this!"

14. Ripped apart

15. Acid type in proteins

16. Trigonometric function

17. Horse's gait

18. Nairobi is its capital

19. Southwest sch. whose mascot is King Triton

20. Deerfield \_\_\_\_ (home of Champney's Restaurant)

21. Estrogen or testosterone

23. Youngster

24. Brief appearance

26. "Wonder Woman" actress Gadot

27. Like an oboe's sound

29. Reach by phone

30. \_\_\_\_ zone (spot to score 6)

31. Car's wheel-connecting rod

32. Newspaper reviewer

34. Functioning

36. Generic dog name

37. "\_\_\_\_ and the Night Visitors" (Gian Carlo Menotti TV opera)

41. Persuade gently

42. Warning sign

43. Capital of Morocco

44. "Spider-Man: Homecoming" actress Daly

45. Capitol Hill VIP

46. The Green \_\_\_\_ (Fenway's left field wall)

48. 1/3600 of an hr.

49. Bud

50. Genre for Orelsan and Cardi B

52. Deerfield's Fall 2022 theater production

57. \_\_\_\_ of the Week

59. French soccer star \_\_\_\_ Kanté

60. Attention-getting sound

63. Not occupied

64. Senior

65. "Trillion" starter for byte

66. Achievement

67. Japanese currency

68. Not challenging

DOWN

1. Home's upper storage area

2. Autobiographical book written by South African comedian Trevor Noah

3. British band named for a medieval torture device

4. Explosive initials

5. Blue-and-white shark

6. Develop

7. "The Wizard of Oz" character

8. Whichever

9. Money that needs to be repaid

10. The Buckeyes of the Big Ten, for short

11. Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Colson Whitehead that takes place at an abusive reform school, with "The"

12. Shortest way around the track

13. First President Roosevelt

21. Hindu festival of colors

22. Periods in history

25. John who sang "Bennie and the Jets" and "Rocky Man"

28. On the button

32. DA's Matt Sheehy and his counterparts at peers schools

33. Ghirardini '23

34. Concealed, as a motive

35. Company VIP

38. "I'm so sick of running as fast as I can, wondering if I'd get there quicker if I was a \_\_\_\_" (Taylor Swift lyric)

39. Muscles that are targets of planking, informally

40. Beret or bonnet

46. Furious

47. Palindromic format for compressed data files

49. Trimmed off, as a rind

51. One in a sit-down meal stack

52. Part in 52-Across

53. Very unpleasant

54. Statistician's calculation

55. Secluded valley

56. Captain Deerfield Peter

57. "I \_\_\_\_ my best"

58. Praiseful poem

61. Hosp. units

62. Might possibly

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## 90 Seconds with Mr. Jarcho

**RORY HARTBLAY**  
*Associate Editor*

ine people.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

I always hesitate to answer that question, because I like to be open minded to whatever experiences come up in life, but realistically, I see myself here. I think that my wife and I have had a variety of experiences in our adult lives, both together and separately from one another, and this is a community that both of us would be like, "Okay, this feels great. Yeah, I'd like to stay."

What's a fun fact about you that people on campus probably wouldn't know just by looking at you?

Given what I teach, probably very few people would guess that I read as much as I do, and one of my favorite things to do with colleagues and students is to trade reading lists or trade book recommendations. So if there's anything that I would like people to learn about me, it would be that. Come give me your book recommendations.

What did you major in in college?

I majored in economics with a minor in English literature.

Are you currently reading any books?

Yes, I just finished a book called There Are Rivers in the Sky. And just last night I started a collection of short stories by Haruki Murakami. The collection is called First Person Singular, and they are excellent!

Favorite thing so far about Deerfield?

This is such a cliché answer, but the community. There are genuinely good people here, and every aspect of my day is interacting with genu-



JONATHAN XU/DEERFIELD SCROLL