

MODUS VIVENDI

A Way of Life

FACULTY PROFILE: DAN BROYLES

PUTTING CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
INTO MOTION

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPELLS SPORTS F-U-N

THE BEAR
CREEK
SCHOOL
MAGAZINE

WINTER 2024





MODUS VIVENDI

Winter 2024

Modus Vivendi is translated as a way of life or a manner of living. The Bear Creek School seeks to develop individuals for whom the classical ideals of excellence in all things, love of learning, spiritual commitment, and self-discipline have become a way of life.

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The mission of The Bear Creek School is to provide a high-quality, Christian liberal arts education in a nurturing environment that will enable each student to become the individual God intends.

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BLOG

For an in-depth view into the happenings at Bear Creek, read our blog at tbcs.org/blog. To receive alerts when new articles are posted, subscribe to the blog by clicking the “bell” icon at the top of the page.

THE BEAR FACTS

Each Friday during the school year, *The Bear Facts*, Bear Creek’s weekly newsletter, is emailed to current parents, faculty, and staff. *The Bear Facts* contains news and announcements from each of the school’s divisions and from the athletics department. Previous posts are archived and searchable on the school website at tbcs.org/bearfacts.

MyBC

Students, parents, faculty, and staff can find a complete list of role-specific resources on our website. See MyBC at the top of any page on tbcs.org and log in.

ON THE COVER

The boys varsity basketball team scrimmaged during Green & White Night 2023 to kick off the Grizzlies’ basketball season. Read about athletics and school spirit at Bear Creek on pages 17 – 19.

Photo by Howard Campbell



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MESSAGE FROM THE HEADMASTER

By Patrick Carruth

I N THE MIDDLE OF MY OFFICE ON A SMALL TABLE, YOU WILL FIND A GLASS CONTAINER FILLED WITH

BASEBALLS. One is from the 1991 World Series, the first one I attended with my dad and my brother. Two of the balls have signatures of players from two state championships in which I had the privilege of coaching. The last one is from a Mariners giveaway and is the “go-to” baseball for tossing and spinning during meetings. Athletics has always played a significant role in my life, from playing youth T-ball to high school football to college baseball. Much of my youth and many cherished memories are centered around athletics.

Movement and physical pursuits are an important part of the Christian liberal arts education. In ancient time, the Greeks (whom many credit with the liberal arts tradition) valued physical exercise and believed competition was a key element in developing virtuous individuals of both body and mind. They also saw sports as a way of fostering civic virtues within the *polis*, thus creating a stable and virtuous state. For the Greeks, athletics were also a form of cultural expression and identity and integral to a liberal arts education, where students learned

academic subjects and focused on an appreciation of the beauty and harmony of physical performance.

Athletics were also important to Plato, one of the key figures in the Greek liberal arts tradition. His Academy was founded in 388 BCE on a grove outside the walls of Athens. Within those walls, students pursued the goods of the mind through *symposia* (dialogues) about philosophy, geometry, and other disciplines. It was also a place where athletes trained for various competitions, including the Olympic Games. The Academy was situated on what the ancients called a *gymnasion*, or gymnasium, and had buildings for training in boxing,

wrestling, mixed martial arts, and ball games. Plato himself was an athlete in his youth, and believed, like the Greeks of his time, in cultivating the ideal human being, who could harmonize the physical, intellectual, and moral aspects of life.

The life of the mind and the body are even more important in the Christian liberal arts because they have a foundation in the scriptures and are key to our nature as human beings and to the work of redemption in our lives. The centrality of the physical body in our reality as humans and in Christ's redemptive sacrifice is difficult to overstate.



We are made as individuals, in the image of God, bestowing on each human being great value, dignity, and worth. Additionally, we are each unique physical representations of that image, being made within a body (Genesis 1:27). Christ “became flesh,” became incarnate, to atone for humanity’s sin and begin the process of redemption and restoration for His people (John 1:14). These doctrines emphasize the importance of the physical body and have been foundational to the Christian understanding of humanity and Christ’s work for millennia. We are encouraged in the scripture to rejoice in our incarnational reality (1 Corinthians 10:31) while also cultivating the life of the soul and mind (Romans 12:1-2) and recognizing those pursuits are linked (Galatians 5:22-26).

So, the Greeks were onto something but had an incomplete view. They saw virtuous people, communities, and states being linked to the pursuit

THE LIFE OF THE MIND AND THE BODY ARE EVEN MORE IMPORTANT IN THE CHRISTIAN LIBERAL ARTS BECAUSE THEY HAVE A FOUNDATION IN THE SCRIPTURE...

of excellence of the mind and the body. Those pursuits alone are noble but prove insufficient as they do not free us from our original sin. Christ’s physical incarnation and atonement accomplished for us what we cannot, and free us to pursue redemption of the mind, the body, and the soul. Athletics is not an ancillary pursuit to a Christian liberal arts education, but it is an integral part of developing students of wisdom, compassion, and courage.

We hope you enjoy reading the winter 2024 issue of *Modus Vivendi* which focuses on how Bear Creek intentionally integrates movement, physical education, and athletics into a Christian liberal arts education, impacting students in preschool through graduation and beyond.



Boys golf team wins the 2023 1A State Championship, and girls golf takes the fourth-place trophy.



Lady Grizzlies track & field team wins third-place trophy at the 2023 1A State Championship meet, and the boys 4x400m relay team wins State title.



Varsity volleyball team comes home with eighth-place trophy from the 2023 1A State Tournament.



PRESCHOOL DESIGNED WITH MOVEMENT IN MIND

By Rachael Urban, Preschool Division Head

Photos by Isabella Kerr

Did you know the average attention span for a three-year-old is around 6 – 8 minutes and by age five that increases to about 12 – 18 minutes? This means if we want to help our preschoolers learn effectively in a classroom setting, we need to get them moving often to reset or reengage their attention. In other words, movement is important for everyone, but for preschoolers it is essential.

At Bear Creek Preschool, we incorporate the art of movement into much of our daily routine to lengthen and maximize a child's learning throughout the day.

In fact, if you were to observe one of our preschool classes, you would quickly recognize both a classroom and curriculum designed with movement in mind. The following are five ways we work to incorporate movement into the life of our program.

Movement Breaks

Movement breaks happen throughout the day but specifically at calendar time when we know that preschoolers are not able to sit still for long periods of time. At calendar time, we use songs that get students up and singing and dancing to reinforce what they are



learning. We have songs and dances about the days of the week and months of the year. Movement is also incorporated in the middle of other lessons through the utilization of quick games like “Simon Says” or simple exercises like standing on one foot, jumping up and down ten times, or midline arm/body movements. Our large classrooms and small class sizes give students space to move around without bumping into one another.

Stations

Our preschool classrooms utilize math and reading “stations” during which students work in groups of four or five for a short period and then rotate to the next station. These small group stations help students spend less time sitting in one spot and solidify a child’s learning by integrating active and hands-on activities. Activities like sorting and classifying objects by size,

patterning math manipulatives by color, and using their fingers to write letters or short vowel words in shaving cream are all examples of this strategy. Some math and reading stations even utilize our wonderful outdoor space, for example, going on a letter hunt around campus or looking for patterns in the building architecture or the natural surroundings.

Recess

Unstructured free play, whether indoors or outside, alone or with friends, can help a preschooler’s brain reset and solidify the learning taking place in the classroom. Recess helps reset a child’s brain to improve memory, attention, and concentration. Our favorite type of recess is held outdoors on the enormous Valley Campus playground where students can get fresh air and play on the slides, swings, sandbox, or little houses. We also have great indoor spaces, so on rainy

days, preschoolers can create obstacle courses in our Little Gym or build creative structures in the Imagination Lab.

Specialist Lessons

At Bear Creek Preschool, we have two specialist programs. Our outdoor science program, called DIG (Discovering and Investigating God's Creation), helps students discover new science concepts by exploring both the garden beds and the nearby wetlands. Preschoolers can touch and experiment with real objects like worms, dirt, and creeks. Our music specialist teaches preschoolers to sing, dance, play instruments, and move to the beat.

Cubs Club

Finally, Cubs Club, our after-school enrichment program, offers a variety of opportunities for students to move their bodies. The program offers classes such as Art, Dance Discovery and Gymnastics, Soccer, and this year we even added a Sports Sampler class so young students can try out different sports like hockey (don't worry we use pool noodles), tennis (with foam rackets and bean bags as balls), and "track & field" where activities include learning to gallop and then using their galloping skills to hurdle over pool noodles (the hurdle relay races are impressive).

Movement truly is essential for preschoolers, and we believe learning is stronger because of it!





JANEEN SORENSEN

PUTTING CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION INTO MOTION

BY MICHELE WYNER, LOWER SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST

CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE GYM. Our motto in Lower School Physical Education (P.E.) class is “Honor God Above the Game.” We strive every day to learn to control our emotions, to play fair, to follow the rules of the games, and to understand God placed us in community to play together, get exercise, accomplish goals, and have fun!

Bear Creek’s P.E. program is built upon the three stages of classical education: grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric. In the gym, classical methodology is applied, just as it is in the classroom, with students first learning the foundational skills of movement before applying their knowledge and skills base to playing sports competitively.

In the grammar stage, P.E. teaches the fundamentals and skills for a variety of sports and activities and focuses on how to move our bodies in coordinated ways, especially the physical development of the students’ gross and fine motor skills. We work on our students’ posture, flexibility, balance, footwork, coordination, strength (with focus on our core strength), and endurance. We are working towards building a strong confident child, not only in academics but in his or her physical capabilities as well.

In Lower School P.E. class, students also learn and practice the skills needed for field sports, such as baseball and softball. For example, in grade 1, students spend a few weeks learning how to throw properly. They learn to step into the athletic position,



JANEEN SORENSEN

Grade 5 students play dodgeball during Middle School Icebreaker.

pivot into the throwing position with the opposite foot and arm toward the target, look at the target, and follow through after the ball is released. Once we have our throwing technique down, we build throwing into simple games. When our students are in grade 4, we work on throwing to bases and cut offs in a kickball game. We teach how the throwing motions transfer to other sports like volleyball (overhand throw) and bowling (underhand throw). Teaching throwing incrementally means that when students start playing any of the games that use throwing, they have the knowledge and skills to participate successfully.

We teach the proper running technique, including how to use our arms, how to hold our hands and head, and how to move our legs and feet. Learning proper form and technique will help students not only become better runners but prevent injuries. To prepare students for racket sports, such as pickleball and badminton, we work on athletic position,



JANEEN SORENSEN

Summer Camp students learn basketball fundamentals at Basketball Camp for Lower School.

footwork, the proper way to grip a racket, and correct forehand and backhand technique. Students learn to rally and may even have low-level contests, all while they are working on the fundamentals.

In Middle School, students move into the dialectic stage of learning by applying the skills they have learned. In P.E. class, this means they work on putting together all those grammar skills into game play. Our goal is that our students can jump into a game comfortably and with confidence because they have learned the foundational skills in Lower School.

In Upper School, the rhetoric stage of learning, students take all they have learned in the grammar and logic stages to play sports at a higher level. Our students have practiced the skills and played in games, now they use critical thinking skills to analyze game strategies, before and after games and during play. Critical thinking is used to move their bodies in creative ways to accomplish their goals. This stair-step approach to physical education allows students



Sophomore Lilah P. directs teammates during a girls varsity soccer game.

to slowly build a foundation of skills from which they can draw as they enter the competitive environment of Middle School and Upper School sports.

Virtue development is also an important part of a classical education. We grow in virtue in our P.E. classes by focusing on good sportsmanship, treating others with respect and kindness, and growing in resilience. Throughout all the physical work in P.E. class, we recognize that game play can sometimes be stressful, so students learn breathing exercises to calm themselves and help them focus. We practice strategies that God taught us about temptation when we may want to bend the rules for an extra point. We dig deep when we are tired, get up when we fall, and pray when we need guidance. We celebrate others as they shine through sports. We smile when we accomplish a goal. At Bear Creek, we teach students to keep “honoring God above the game” in the forefront of their minds so they remember what is truly important about sports and games.

THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN LOWER SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS

BY TYLER MENDEZONA, VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL HEAD COACH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST

Physical education in Lower School provides incredible opportunities for students to learn very important skills, both mentally and physically, that will directly aid in their success as Middle School and Upper School athletes. Throughout Lower School Physical Education classes, students not only learn and improve their gross motor skills, but also learn how to play together in teams, which is crucial to success in team sports. Students have a plethora of opportunities, starting in kindergarten, that allow them to develop physically and athletically, each at his or her own pace.

By the time students are old enough to participate in Middle School and Upper School sports, they are well equipped physically to not only perform, but also to do so safely in a way that honors God. Another incredibly important aspect of Lower School P.E. class is the mental growth that takes place in the gym. At a young age, students are not sure where their physical limitations are, but P.E. class provides a safe space to explore athleticism and push mentally beyond limitations in order to maximize potential. In the end, there is a very real partnership between Physical Education and Athletics, and when that partnership functions well, both benefit with positive cultures and excellent programs.

Middle School Spells Sports

F-U-N

BY NATHAN CAMPBELL, MIDDLE SCHOOL
ATHLETICS DIRECTOR

PARTICIPATING IN ATHLETICS AT BEAR CREEK IS MORE THAN JUST PLAYING A SPORT AND DEVELOPING SKILLS. Middle School athletics are about every student having a fun, positive experience while also learning the value of commitment and growing as a leader. Student-athletes are well-rounded, not only becoming great athletes, but also great students.

HAVING FUN WHILE STRENGTHENING FRIENDSHIPS

The Middle School athletics program at Bear Creek is designed to be fun! We want every student-athlete to finish the season having had a positive experience.



Boys Basketball

HELEN HE

The opportunity to compete on a sports team with peers and strengthen friendships is intrinsic to a positive experience in school. We want students to participate not only to improve their athletic skills but to have an opportunity to do so with their peers, building lifelong friendships while having fun.

To that end, Middle School teams are selected with the student experience in mind. Although skill level plays a role, we are also intentional about placing as many students as possible on teams with their friends in the same grade level. Our no-cut policy means more fun for more kids. Additionally, while winning is always enjoyable, Middle School coach training emphasizes prioritizing the fun experience over the win.

LEARNING THE VALUE OF COMMITMENT



JANEEN SORENSEN

Girls Soccer

One of the most important aspects of competing on a sports team at Bear Creek is learning the value of commitment. Like the expectations of a classroom space, where students are required to be on time and give their best effort, we expect the same from our athletes. Successful teams and programs have student-athletes who buy in and commit to one another with their time, their focus, and their energy.

We strive to make our teams a space where students learn the importance of commitment and get to see that value pay off through their dedication to each



QUINCY WONG

Volleyball

other. Additionally, Middle School sports seasons are intentionally designed to make that commitment more attainable. Teams practice only 2 – 3 days each week, and each season lasts just 7 or 8 weeks.

GROWING AS LEADERS

A team environment lends many opportunities for servant leadership. With athletics being an extension of the classroom environment, student-athletes can further grow as Christ-like leaders amongst their peers. Athletes help to set up drills and assist with equipment, demonstrating servanthood to their fellow players. Moreover, they can help demonstrate skills to their teammates. Being a part of an athletics team provides middle schoolers with a practical context to learn leadership qualities that are valuable in the classroom and in life.

DEVELOPING FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

We strive to ensure that all our athletes improve the fundamental skills required by their sports over the course of the season. No matter what level of experience a student possesses, participating on a team at Bear Creek provides the perfect opportunity to develop foundational athletic skills and learn how to use those abilities in competitive games.

We know from experience that Middle School athletics provide our students with extraordinary experiences, memories, and leadership opportunities. It is through athletics that so many kids find those beneficial situations which enable them to grow in wisdom, compassion, and courage. The memories made with their classmates and friends provide rewarding experiences which balance the academic rigor in the classroom. With nearly 75% of our Middle School students participating in sports, we believe that it is in the gym, on the field, or around the track, that our students continue the journey of becoming the individuals God intends.



TARA FORD

Cross Country



JANEEN SORENSEN

SCHOOL SPIRIT

BY DAVE URBAN, UPPER SCHOOL ASSOCIATE DEAN OF STUDENTS

I believe! *I believe!*

I believe that! *I believe that!*

I believe that we! *I believe that we!*

*...I believe that we will win, I believe that we will win,
I believe that we will win, I believe that we will win!*

Ah, those words are music to a sports fan's ears. Although not a Bear Creek original, this is a chant we find ourselves shouting at the end of athletics contests in response to the Grizzlies sealing another victory or clearly being on their way to one.

And although the motivation for the chant is centered

on the word "win," I would argue the more significant word repeated in the chant is "we." *I believe that we will win.*

Because it's not just about the team on the court or field, is it? It's about the community surrounding them. Yes, many athletes play their respective sports for the love of the game, and we love them for that. But there is a reason people come and watch them play. Like few things in life, sports have a unique way of bringing people together to support one another, celebrate one another, and yes, at times, even cry with one another. Sports don't just create team spirit; they create school spirit. Whether we ever stop and intentionally think about it, the reality is that the team we are cheering



CINDY MCGAHILL

THROUGH ATHLETICS

for is representing all of us. When we take part in our athletics events, we are celebrating a special community that we are all part of just as much as our athletes.

So, as we enjoy another sports season here at Bear Creek, I am reminded once again that this whole sports thing isn't simply about my love for basketball (or soccer, or volleyball, etc.) or that my kid is one of the athletes running around on the court. It is about coming together as a community. This is why I asked some of our ASB Grizzly Spirit student leaders to share with me why they think athletics-inspired school spirit is so important to Bear Creek's school culture and what some of their favorite sports-related school spirit moments

have been during their Upper School years.

Here's some of what they shared with me:

“ School spirit is all about encouragement, and athletics gives it an intention and purpose to encourage our friends who work so hard to perform at their best level. One of my favorite school spirit moments was during this year's fall sports pep assembly in the gym...having the lights off and the drum line made for an unforgettably intense introduction to a fun-filled celebration. I loved it because of the way it involved our community holistically.” *Braelyn B. '24, 2023 - 2024 Cheer Captain*



Baseball team arrives at Prom 2023

“My favorite school spirit moment has to be the back-to-back years that the baseball team has come home from Districts and walked straight onto the prom boat. Just coming down those stairs in our jerseys, everyone cheering for our win, those were unforgettable moments with an amazing team and crowd.” *Jaxon F. '24, 2021 – 2022 ASB Grizzly Spirit Head*

“I think school spirit and athletics go together so easily because of the nature of watching a sports game. You cheer when you win and come together after a tough loss. One of my favorite school spirit moments was the Rivalry Day at Overlake last fall. Bear Creek brought a whole troop of people, ready to support our girls soccer and volleyball teams. The energy was unmatched, everyone was dressed to theme, and by the end of the night everyone had lost their voices.” *Savanna J. '25, 2022 – 2023 ASB Grizzly Spirit Head*

“I think athletics and school spirit connect so easily because there is nothing like cheering for classmates or friends doing something they love.” *Jack S. '26, 2023 – 2024 ASB Grizzly Spirit Head*

I was recently at the basketball team parent meeting, and Coach Mendezona said something that I kept thinking about long after the meeting was over. “It’s a silly game when you think about it,” he said. “Putting a rubber ball through a metal circle. But what the game can teach us about life, teamwork, and community is profound.”

Life...teamwork...community. Three gifts God has so graciously given us here at Bear Creek. May we continue to steward and enjoy them well as we come together to cheer on our teams. Go Grizzlies!



LEVI MARSHALL '25

Grizzlies fans with the volleyball team



LEVI MARSHALL '25

Grizzlies fans with the girls soccer team

FACULTY PROFILE: **DAN BROYLES**

BY JODEE RAMIREZ

PHOTO BY SINI FERNANDEZ





“IT’S BEEN REALLY POSITIVE TO COACH BASKETBALL AND SEE HOW THESE KIDS MATURE OVER THE YEARS, ...JUST SEEING HOW THE LORD HAS TRANSFORMED THEM HAS BEEN VERY, VERY COOL TO EXPERIENCE.”

ALTHOUGH HOMEGROWN in Washington, Dan Broyles and his family came to The Bear Creek School by way of Tanzania. In 2015, he, his wife Lindy, and their three young children, Peter, Lucy, and Jack, followed the Lord’s call and moved to Tanzania to begin their work with orphaned children. They established

a home, called *Moyo Wakila Mama* which is Swahili for “Every Mother’s Heart,” to provide a safe dwelling, loving caretakers, and health insurance for young children. Beyond the establishment of this facility, the Broyles have expanded their focus to include reuniting children in orphanages with their families. With the foster home in full operation and the establishment of an active ministry in Tanzania, Dan and Lindy were able to shift their focus to fundraising to support the ministry financially. After four years of hard work, the Broyles began to plan their move back to the states.

Much like their willingness to faithfully follow the Lord’s calling to Africa, Dan and Lindy, a high school math teacher, prayed for guidance as they searched for jobs in the states, casting their net wide and leaving the location of their new home entirely up to God. Awoken in the middle of the night, Lindy was prompted by the Holy Spirit to look at new job openings on the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) website.

Right away, two Bear Creek job openings popped up, one for a Middle School math teacher and one for an Upper School math teacher. As Washington natives, the Broyles

couldn’t help but feel God’s provision and calling to the school. Dan and Lindy quickly navigated the interview process and were enthusiastically offered employment at The Bear Creek School in 2019.

Dan teaches Middle School math and robotics and coaches Upper School basketball. He grew up locally in Carnation and earned his undergraduate degree at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma. Dan spent his grade-school years playing football and basketball before joining the crew team in college. After graduating from Antioch University with a master’s in education, Dan began teaching middle school math in the public school systems in Tacoma and Puyallup.

When asked why he chose to pursue middle school teaching, Dan replied “I had a really tough time in my middle school years; I was bullied. When I was in college, I prayed, ‘Lord, what do you want me to do?’ and I just felt that I wanted kids to not have the experience that I had in middle school. I want to create a safe space for the kids who may get overlooked, who may get picked on, who may get bullied. And to really love on them and speak truth to



Tanzania 2023

kids and say, ‘hey, Jesus sees you.’” Dan creates an environment of respect and faith in his classroom so students can exchange ideas, free from the fear of judgement or negative consequences. This allows his students to creatively approach problems and learn from their mistakes. Dan also works to dismantle lies by speaking truth over his students and reminding them that God has a plan for each of them.

Soon after he began teaching Middle School math at Bear Creek, Dan was approached by Tyler Mendezona, who teaches P.E. in both Middle School and Lower School and also serves as Bear

Creek’s Varsity Boys Basketball Head Coach, and asked to help out the boys basketball program as a JV coach. Dan notes, “It’s been a lot of fun to work with Tyler. The culture that he has created is positive, loving, and very encouraging, but it’s also a lot of hard work.”

Dan dove headfirst into this new role, pulling from his experience playing sports in school and his years coaching basketball in the public school system. Dan has continued to work with Coach Mendezona and the boys program for four years in a variety of assistant coaching roles, working directly with boys on the JV and JV-C teams. This opportunity for

Dan to work with students in grades 9 through 12 who do not currently play at a varsity level has turned into a perfect fit. The JV and JV-C teams give these students an opportunity to learn the sport, grow in their skills, and experience competing against other teams at the same level.

One aspect of Bear Creek’s athletics program that appealed to Dan is its accessibility to inexperienced players. “I like our no-cut policy as it gives all our kids opportunities to play and to grow and mature as young men.” This policy allows students to join whichever sport they are interested in, regardless of skill or experience. Beyond the



Linda Z. throws a pie in the face of her favorite math teacher after winning the 2023 Pi Day competition.



Dan and Lindy with students at the 2023 Winter Dance

policy, Dan strives to offer playing time to each member of the team. This not only fosters a sense of teamwork and self-confidence, but it also supports the ultimate goal of JV sports: building up players' stamina and skills so they can play at the varsity level.

It is evident when talking with Dan that his passion and interest are not held solely in his teaching and coaching, but rather in his faith in Christ and desire to fully submit to His will. This is clearly seen in the arc of his life as he faithfully served in Tanzania and as he followed the Lord's call to The Bear Creek School.

His role as a JV basketball coach is not a deviation from his calling but rather an extension of his ministry.

Coaching basketball has even allowed Dan to extend his ministry beyond Middle School to Upper School students. "I've had many of these students in class as they've gone through Middle School. Coaching them in Upper School and continuing that relationship with them has been a lot of fun." The relationships and trust Dan has built with his students in the math classroom now persists through students' Upper School experience as their Middle School math teacher takes on the role of their coach.

"It's been really positive to coach basketball and see how these kids mature over the years, from middle school to high school, then to watch them graduate. Just seeing how the Lord has transformed them has been very, very cool to experience. Even as they go off to college, my wife and I try to stay in touch with them as much as we can. And they still ask us to pray for them."

When asked what he is most proud of, Dan humbly answers, "being able to partner with Jesus, speaking truth into kids' lives, and making Jesus real in the lives of our students." And he does just that. In the classroom, on the court, and in the time in between, Dan has brought his mission mindset to The Bear Creek School.



BC

2023
WAA / GSA CREDIT UNION
TRACK & FIELD STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS
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BECOMING A WORLD CLASS ATHLETE

BY SINI FERNANDEZ

BRAELYN BAKER '24 has been a Bear Creek student since 2010 when she attended preschool in Mrs. Fletcher's P4 class. In the intervening 14 years, she has grown up to be one of the fastest girls in the country, as evidenced by the four Junior Olympic National Championships she won last year (200M USATF Indoor, 100M USATF Outdoor, 200M USATF Outdoor, 400M hurdles USATF Outdoor) in the 17 – 18-year-old division. Additionally, she won four 1A State Championships last spring (100M, 200M, 300M hurdles, long jump), setting multiple Washington State records along the way.

If you have only seen Braelyn in blue face paint repping for Lewis House or on the basketball sidelines cheering for the Grizzlies, then read on to learn how Bear Creek helped shape a local girl into such a contender and what she plans to do with all that speed.

MV: Have you always been fast? Did you ever participate in any other sports besides running track?

BB: I began dancing ballet at a very young age which helped me develop a strong foundation in balance, flexibility, and strength. I believe this set me up for a complete understanding of how my body moves and how to envision form out on the track.

Of course, my favorite time of any school day in Lower School, and even in Middle School, was to run outside during recess or activity period. However, I did not start running track until the fifth grade when my older sister, who was running high school track, began working with a personal track coach. I had to get special permission to join since the workout group was for highschoolers only. I am beyond thankful for this opportunity because I was introduced to track by chasing kids who were bigger and faster than I was. I wasn't discouraged; I was excited that one day I might be in their shoes, and I simply loved running in circles!

Left: Braelyn competing at the 2023 1A Track & Field State Championships. Photo by Northwest Sports Photography

MV: How has Bear Creek helped you balance being a world-class athlete and a high school student?

BB: All my teachers, directly or indirectly, have grown and shaped me academically, supported me athletically, and led me spiritually. I believe each of these areas are important in every individual's life throughout their time on earth. I am working out my mind, body, and soul within the community, and it is by the grace of my teachers who worked with me to accommodate any conflicts that arose.

Lindy Broyles was Braelyn's math teacher during both freshman and sophomore years, and she comments, "Braelyn stood out because she continued to ask questions until she had understanding, which completely changed the atmosphere in class. Her classmates were impacted by this hunger for the truth as they then also wanted to know and experience a deeper understanding of concepts as we progressed through the year. More recently, I have watched Braelyn take this same tenacity and desire for truth to her relationship with Jesus. It is a blessing to see how God is working in and through her. I am very excited to see what happens in her next stage of life!"

My Spanish teacher Profe Gardiner has always been prayerful and a light in our community who celebrates her students more than anything. Mrs. Osborn, who grew up as a gifted martial artist, empathizes with me and my hectic schedule and gives me grace. Mr. Higley is involved in my track process and is consistently a light of encouragement to me. Mrs. Broyles knows my character, not only in my love for math but also in comradery with my passion for track, and her prayers mean the world to me. As my Philosophical Theology teacher, Mr. Urban challenged me spiritually which effected and enhanced my missional work on the track. And Coach Benson has truly been the most humbling coach to work with because of his trust in his athletes



COURTESY PHOTO

2023 1A Track & Field State Championships

and how he works with each athlete individually. The faculty and coaches exemplify the true beauty of the Bear Creek community.

MV: Are you able to take advantage of leadership opportunities at school along with your priorities on the track?

BB: On and off the track, I have a mission in life to spread the honest peace that Jesus can give our souls when we give our lives to Him. This has shaped the way that I commit myself to the community.

I want to give back, and so I serve as Senior Class Representative along with Titus Urban and lead the decorating sub-committee within the ASB Social Committee run by Sophia Moe. I am co-captain of the cheer squad alongside Clarie Zhou, and I hope to lead Bear Creek's track & field team in any role that I can fit. Outside the school hallways, I am a YoungLife leader and a part of the Lose Your Life leadership team which give me opportunities to spread God's word and immerse myself in my community. These roles compliment everything that God calls me to do, and my involvement in these leadership positions has created lasting experiences and helped shape who I want to be.

ASB Advisor and Associate Dean of Students Dave Urban says, "Braelyn is an incredible example of someone who is intent on stewarding her talents and accomplishments in a way that brings glory to God. She is incredibly humble and so quick to praise God and give credit to others whenever she is asked about her athletic achievements."



HOWRD CAMPBELL

2023 Green & White Night

MV: You are arguably one of the fastest girls in the country. Tell us about your training schedule.

BB: I train about three hours every day, all year except in August. I rest on Sundays when I need recovery. Track is technical and all about counting hundredths of seconds even in a 400-meter run. My training is ever changing; there are cycles of conditioning that break down the body and technique work that fine tunes the usefulness of each muscle.

I train on the track at Redmond High School as well as at Eastside Gym, and during the school year, I am enrolled in Bear Creek's Strength Training elective and working with Coach Hill has been a blessing. I appreciate the mid-day workouts when my evening academic schedule does not permit extra time in the gym.

Coach Hill says, "Braelyn has been given a gift by God, and she has done everything she can to maximize that gift. She's the kind of person who raises the temperature of the room. Everyone is happier and in a better mood or has a better day when she is around."

MV: During the spring high school track season, how do you balance participation as a Grizzly with all the invitational meets around the country?

BB: During the high school season, no matter where I compete, I must represent Bear Creek. The club (indoor) and summer (outdoor) seasons are unaffiliated with high school, and therefore I can compete in as many meets as I want and wear any uniform that pleases me.



2022 Icebreaker

Working with my coach at Redmond Sprint Club Carlos Fontenot, Bear Creek’s track coach Ben Benson, and my father Dr. Duane Baker, is the most amazing blessing. Together, they work tirelessly to figure out how I can compete in out-of-state invitationals while maintaining eligibility for high school track.

Coach Benson says, “Braelyn is not just an athlete, but an outstanding representation of what makes athletics truly exceptional. Braelyn works harder, trains harder, and cares more than anyone I’ve ever met. Her excellence athletically, academically, and in her community epitomizes what it means to be an athlete.”

Behind the scenes, my dad helps map out my competition schedule and tells me what times I need to run in order to meet my goals. I count on him to look into the future and see what event I can do right now to help me four months down the road.

MV: What’s next after Bear Creek?

BB: I have committed to run track for Duke University and am thankful for the opportunity to continue my academic and athletic journey with a team that has a strong comradery and goals that align with mine. I am training with the 2024 Olympics in mind, knowing that God will pave my path and I will do what I can to make the best version of myself.

MV: What are your career aspirations?

BB: I would like to run my own interior design company. During my junior and senior high school years, I have



Braelyn’s college project workspace design

been dual enrolled at Bear Creek and in Running Start, and I plan to graduate high school with a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Interior Design from Bellevue College. This has challenged me academically and athletically, and I am thankful for this opportunity.

Studio art teacher Trinity Osborn comments, “Humble and driven, Braelyn radiates a student who is thoroughly passionate...She was in my Advanced Studio Art class during her junior year while also taking college interior design classes. We decided that her final project in Studio Art would be an exploration of what she was also learning in interior design as she designed her own loft space and shared the journey from sketches to in-program digital work to the final renditions.”

Since I’ll start my college career at Duke with a degree under my belt, I plan to study pre-law with a focus on contract law. I want to be able to confidently run the business and artistic sides of my interior design company while making the most of my education at a younger age.

Chad Pohlman, Bear Creek’s Athletics Director, sums up why it’s so easy to cheer for Braelyn as she pursues her dreams. “Braelyn possesses something incredibly unique. That rare trifecta which we strive for and encourage all our student-athletes to pursue: unmistakable talent, unwavering commitment to be the best, and unquestionable character...What a unique and special gift that God has given Braelyn, and we are thankful that she is sharing her gifts with our community.”



COURTESY PHOTO

AN UNWAVERING DESIRE TO GIVE AND SERVE

BY SINI FERNANDEZ

The Butler family was first introduced to The Bear Creek School in 2018 when, by a stroke of luck or, as they like to call it, a “God wink,” they had to look for a new preschool for their daughter Madison. Their son Cameron was already a first grader enrolled in the neighborhood elementary school, with plans for their then 3-year-old daughter to attend a small neighboring Christian preschool in the fall, then follow in her brother’s footsteps when kindergarten came. With news arriving that the preschool would be closing its doors, their path was redirected. They were blown away when they visited Bear Creek Preschool and

immensely grateful for the new course charted for their family.

Lisa says she vividly remembers almost pinching herself in Madison’s P3 classroom at Curriculum Night, wondering if it was too good to be true. She says, “With each bubble-filled morning drop-off, the regular personal, warm welcomes, and every meaningful prayer card, we were full of gratitude, appreciation, and awe of the care, attention, thoughtfulness, and community that a preschool could offer.” It was because of Madison’s preschool experience that the family later transferred both their children back to Bear Creek when they were in grades 1 and 4.

Lisa continues, “We are delighted that the reality of The Bear Creek School meets and exceeds our expectations: from the friendly faces greeting us at the doors to the well-rounded curriculum, passionate teachers, and the feeling that each member of our family is truly known and cherished.” She says that they often hear the kids commenting on how amazing it is they are known by name by so many, and they are encouraged by the personal connections they have with faculty.

Lisa says she and Bret have always loved to be engaged in the school setting, believing strongly in the value of a parent partnership with teachers and staff. “Here at Bear Creek, I am so grateful that I have an opportunity to serve in many roles: as a Middle School grade-level parent rep, Lower School room parent, member of the PTF board, as well as a volunteer for school events, such as class parties, Fall Carnival, Walk-a-thon, and Christmas decorating.”

When the Butlers think of the virtue of generosity, they think of it as giving from the heart which can take many forms, each equally impactful, whether through showing empathy or compassion, spreading joy through small acts of kindness, or the giving of one’s talents. “What we hope to impart on our children is that at the core of generosity is love. When we give freely through whatever means we have available, we are pouring love into our community and serving a purpose greater than our own.” They understand as parents that what they model for their children lays the foundation for the way their children will see the world. Children have a front-row seat in witnessing the things parents value and how they spend their time.

In the Butler’s home, Cameron ’30 and Madison ’33 see their parents donating time and energy by volunteering in the classroom, attending chapel, donating to food drives, setting up monthly food blessings for teachers,

surprising students with back-to-school donuts, or even making a meal together for a family in need.

Lisa concludes, “What a beautifully encouraging sight it is when our young ones imitate the spirit of generosity whether through presenting someone with a freshly picked flower just because, leaving a handwritten note on a nightstand, or unprompted collecting of gently used items to donate. There is no greater joy than bearing witness to these acts of service, knowing the immense love, compassion, and care that motivated their actions. We believe there is no legacy greater to leave our children and future generations with than an unwavering desire to give and serve.”

INVEST IN THE FUTURE

Legacy giving is a powerful way to make an impact on tomorrow’s world through the education of future Christian leaders—individuals prepared to engage the world with wisdom, compassion, and courage. Your thoughtful planning to advance the mission of The Bear Creek School will make a difference in the world your children, grandchildren, or even great-grandchildren will inherit.

If you have already made a provision for The Bear Creek School in your will or estate plan, please let us know so we may say thank you and recognize your generosity by welcoming you into our *Legacy Circle* of like-minded donors.

For more information about making a legacy gift in your will or through life insurance, property, or other assets, contact Mariana Keller, Vice President for Philanthropy and Community Engagement, at mkeller@tbcs.org or 425-898-1720 ext. 340.

FOSTERING COMMUNITY SPIRIT

BY KATRINA THOMAS

The Bear Creek School holds a special place in the hearts of the Malloy family. Their journey with the school began when they relocated from Texas when their son Jack '28 was starting in P3 and their son Eldon '26 was in kindergarten. Shannon Malloy recently shared insights into their decision to become part of the Bear Creek community and the

transformative experiences that have unfolded since.

When asked why they chose Bear Creek, Shannon explained that a friend, who was already a part of the Bear Creek family, recommended the school. "We thought this was a pretty special place, and we were right!" The Malloys quickly realized they had stumbled upon something

extraordinary, and Bear Creek soon became more than just a school—it became a cherished community for the whole family.

Shannon said there's a strong sense of community at the school, where families genuinely support and uplift one another. This sense of camaraderie adds an extra layer of warmth and belonging, making Bear Creek not



JANEEN SORENSEN

Shannon at the Annual Fund at the kick-off of All-In 2023.

just an educational environment but a second home for many.

Shannon highlighted the school's unique approach, saying, "Each teacher and staff member shares a common goal: to nurture and develop each student individually. Unlike the cookie-cutter approach found in some institutions, Bear Creek values the unique journey of each child."

Getting involved at Bear Creek was a natural step for Shannon. She shared, "Starting as a volunteer in the preschool and kindergarten classrooms, I witnessed the dedication of teachers like Allison Fletcher and Renee Matson. Inspired by their hard work, I felt compelled to ensure they had the resources necessary for their crucial roles in shaping young minds."

The Malloy family's involvement extended to fundraising efforts, including the Reach UP campaign to build the Upper School. Shannon expressed her gratitude, saying, "I am thankful for the families who came before us, with their generosity enabling the construction of the school's Main building and their commitment to shaping the future of Bear Creek." Wanting to contribute to the legacy of giving back, she decided to invest her time, treasure, and talents to sustain the traditions that make Bear Creek exceptional.

Shannon's role as a co-chair for the Annual Fund, alongside



JANEEN SORENSEN

Shannon making "bandcakes" after the Middle School band concert.



COURTESY PHOTO

Shannon hosting a coffee as a parent rep.

Daniel Ro, has been a fulfilling experience. She shared, "I see it as an opportunity to encourage other families to join hands in supporting the school's mission. Through the Annual Fund, families can ensure that every teacher, classroom, and activity has the resources needed to provide an exceptional

educational experience for every student."

The Malloy family's journey at Bear Creek is a testament to the school's transformative impact. Bear Creek is not just an educational choice—it is treasured traditions, a cherished community, and a legacy of giving back.

GRIZZLY



After a six-year hiatus, the **Booster Club** brought back the **Grizzly Open** in June 2023, a beloved golf tournament tradition in our school community. With more than 100 golfers participating and \$65,000 raised for Bear Creek athletics, the event was a smashing success! A huge thank you to our donors and everyone who made the



OPEN



event possible, notably our tournament chairs Ron and Christy Branch.

The tradition continues this summer at Bear Creek Country Club in Woodinville on **Monday, June 24, 2024**. We hope you will mark your calendar and plan to participate in this fun summer tradition.

Photos by Cindy McCahill



COMPETING WITH CONFIDENCE: A COLLEGIATE ATHLETE'S JOURNEY TO A NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

BY JODEE RAMIREZ

OLIVIA MARKEZICH '19 signed with University of Notre Dame as a senior at The Bear Creek School. During her tenure as a college athlete, Olivia has won numerous state and regional titles while working toward a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing, which she earned in 2023, and a Master of Science in Business Analytics which she plans to complete in spring 2024. Most notably, Olivia won the steeplechase national title at the 2023 NCAA Division I Women's Outdoor Track & Field Championships in Austin, TX. She crossed the finish line in the 3000-meter event with a time of 9:25.03, winning the event by more than 5 seconds. Olivia agreed to share her experience training for and winning this competition with *Modus Vivendi* via an email interview.

MV: Tell me about your experience with collegiate track & field.

OM: Running in college has exceeded all my expectations. I am so thankful to have such a supportive team that makes practice enjoyable and pushes me to be my best as well as coaches who put so much care into our training. Making the jump from high school to college athletics was daunting at first, but over the last few years, I have gained the confidence and fitness to race with the best in the country.



MV: Tell us about winning the 2023 steeplechase national title.

OM: Winning a national championship was a dream come true, a dream that I didn't ever think was possible when I began my freshman year at Notre Dame. I started setting my sights on winning the steeplechase national title after my indoor track season last winter when I placed second in the 3000m at the 2023 Indoor Nationals. That accomplishment gave me the confidence going into the outdoor track season that I would be able to accomplish something big. However, there are always uncontrollable moments in every season. I started racing last season later than planned due to some hip pain, which meant I only raced the steeplechase two times before the 2023 National Championship meet. Because the steeplechase requires such technical form, it was nerve-wracking to not have as much



preparation going over the hurdles in races. I went into the National Championships with the fifth fastest time in the country; however, I knew that my fitness was better than what I had shown in my races so far.

The competitor with the number one ranked time going into the race took off *fast*. It was hot and humid in Austin, so most of the competitors wanted to start out slower to minimize the risk of fading in the second half of the race. But not me. Right away, I made the choice that I was going to stick on the lead racer and do my best to not let her drop me. It was just the two of us way out in front of the rest of the field for the entire race, battling it out for the national title. With about 600 meters left in the race, I was gaining on her and getting ready to start kicking. I gave the last lap everything I had left and ended up winning by 5 seconds. The best part was

running over to my family in the stands to hug them as they had tears in their eyes.

MV: What surprised you the most about the experience?

OM: It always surprises me how much your mentality affects how you perform athletically. Especially with distance running, you have to be so mentally strong and confident in your ability. When everything starts hurting in a race and those negative thoughts start creeping in, everything can go downhill. I was surprised with how I was able to maintain my positive mindset and confidence throughout the race. Even when I started to drop off the leader for a little bit, I never doubted that I could come back and win.

MV: What was the most rewarding part? The most challenging part?

OM: After dedicating years to your sport and working to compete at the highest level, it's just so rewarding to finally accomplish a goal like this. The best part is seeing how happy and excited my coaches, trainers, teammates, and family were. It's such an honor to be able to accomplish something like this for everyone who works tirelessly to give me the best training they can and to keep me healthy throughout it. It is also an honor representing my university in such a way. I am just the second Outdoor Track National Champion in Notre Dame's women's program history.

The most challenging part is always controlling my nerves before a race. This is something that I really struggled with in my first few years in college. It took a lot of practice learning how to believe in myself as much as my coaches believe in me and to take that confidence to the starting line. But it gets easier the longer you work on it.

MV: What did you learn from the experience?

OM: Believe in yourself! It's all about knowing what you can do and having the confidence to execute it on the day of competition.



COURTESY PHOTO

MV: How did Bear Creek help prepare you for this experience?

OM: My cross country coach at Bear Creek, Carla Darr, really emphasized the importance of having fun with your sport and loving what you do. I also learned the importance of being united as a team and how to be a good teammate. Although running can be viewed as an individual sport, you are so much stronger when you are working together in races and pushing each other in practice every day. Learning this in high school helped me choose a college team that held those same values which positively impacted my experience running in college.

MV: What advice would you give to current Bear Creek students?

OM: Have fun with your sport! You perform better when you are happy, and you will have more longevity in your sport and less burnout when you enjoy what you're doing. Also, don't stress

about the little things too much. There are always uncontrollable struggles in sports, and the only thing that matters is how you respond to those moments.

MV: What are your plans after you graduate?

OM: I never thought I would say this when I was at Bear Creek, but I am planning to be a professional runner! This past track season really showed me how much potential I have to continue competing and excelling in my sport at a professional level. Last summer, I signed a Name Image and Likeness (NIL) deal with a sportswear company called On. NIL deals allow student-athletes to obtain brand sponsorship while still maintaining their amateur status to compete in the NCAA. I plan to compete for Notre Dame in the 2024 indoor and outdoor track seasons before launching a professional career.

MV: Congratulations Olivia and all the best in your upcoming endeavors!

Remembering Dr. Ron Lynch

August 8, 1939 – September 16, 2023



“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love Him.”

1 Corinthians 2:9 NLT

At the end of last summer, The Bear Creek School community lost its founding drama director, our beloved Dr. Ron Lynch, who passed peacefully into the arms of Jesus Christ, His Lord and Savior, on September 16, 2023.

Ron was born in Mound City, KS, on August 8, 1939, and his family moved to California when he was young. After graduating with a degree in theater arts from San Diego State, he enjoyed a brief and successful foray into the music industry as a member of The Cascades, earning a gold record. Along the way, he met Patti, the love of his life. They were married in San Diego and in 1967, moved to Seattle with their three children, Dawn, Darcy, and Ron, where Dr. Lynch pursued a long career in education, both as a teacher and an administrator. He retired from public education in 2000 only to quickly join the faculty at The Bear Creek School when Redmond Campus was opened.

Dr. Lynch left an incredible legacy at The Bear Creek School, building the drama department from the

ground up, seeing individual student talents and cultivating them to fruition, nurturing struggling students who needed encouragement, and always personally and professionally supporting the larger mission of The Bear Creek School. Ron directed hundreds of students in countless productions over the course of the next 19 years, including at least one Shakespeare play each year. Together, he and Patti created amazing sets in the prop shop, and their drama students felt like they were a family. His students say that he was impactful and influential, gave them confidence and joy, and through his example, encouraged them to serve selflessly and use their gifts to glorify God.

It is lovely to look back and see what a beautiful life God wove through Ron’s desire to serve Him. Ron is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Patti, their children Dawn Lynch (Royce Bird), Darcy Lynch (Mark Jannitto), Ron Lynch II (Colleen), and grandchildren, Krystina, Sara, Hannah, Jack, Sam (Bella), and Maddi.



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THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2024

8:30 AM - 10:30 AM



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